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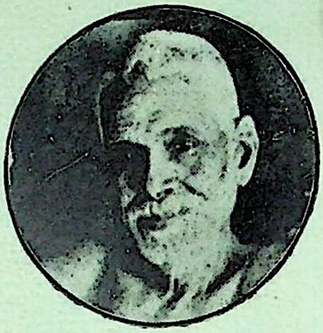

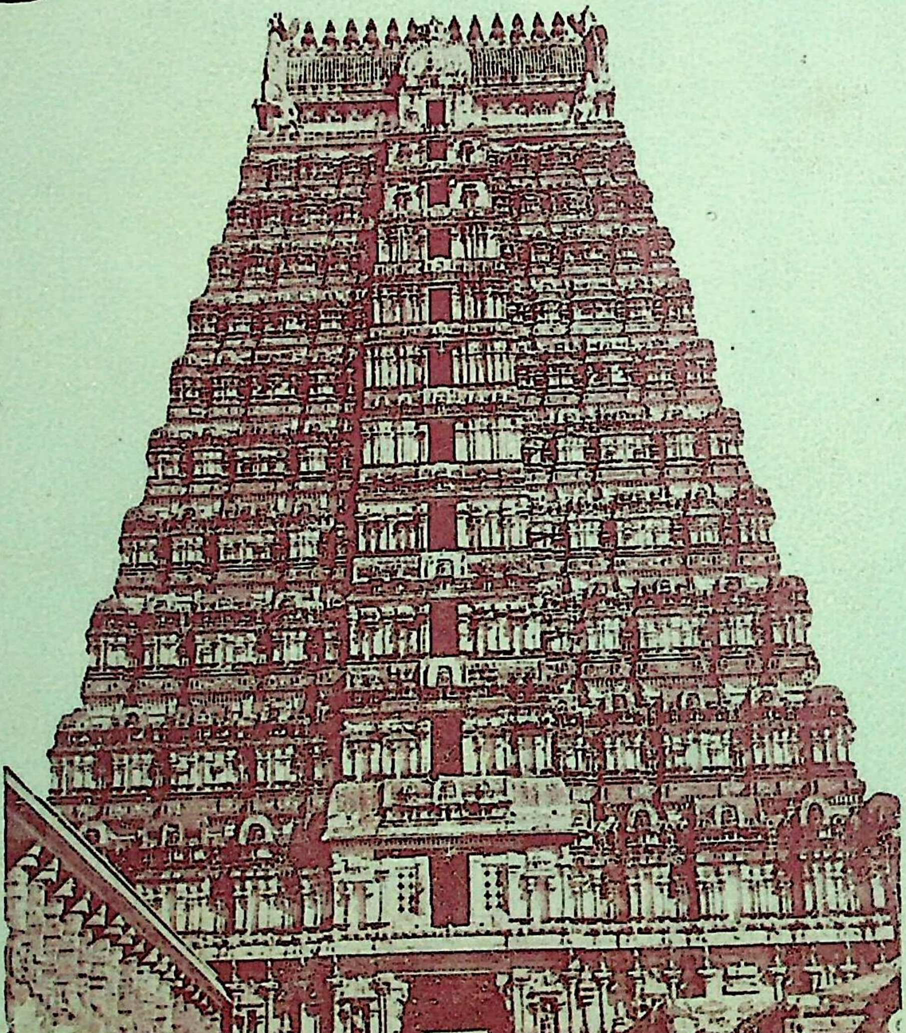

KUMBHABHISHEKAM

Souvenir

17/15-

KUMBHABHISHEKAM

Souvenir

AUGUST 1966

11/15

This Souvenir carries many articles, the subject of interest being mainly centered on Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, written mostly by his ardent devotees. To the contributors who readily responded to the request for articles, I express my grateful thanks on behalf of the Kumbhabhisekam Committee. I am also thankful to the advertisers who responded to our appeal and favoured us with advertisements. Finally I wish to thank M/s. Ravai & Sons, Big Street, Madras-5, to whom we owe the excellent printing and get up of the Souvenir.

T. M. P. Mahadevan

*

As the Chairman of the Kumbhabhisekam Committee I wish to thank all those who have made generous contributions for this sacred work.

My grateful thanks are also due to Mr. Tarapore, Mr. C. Loganathan, Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, and Mr. K. R. Sundararajan without whose active participation and co-operation I would not have completed this Kumbhabhisekam work.

Ma. F. Taleyarkhan

SOUVENIR PUBLISHED BY
MA. F. TALEYARKHAN

APPEAL

Dear friend,

A fitting memorial to Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, in tune with the fine setting of the Sri Mathrubutheswara Shrine and New Hall in Sri Ramanasramam, has been sixteen years in building and, reviewing the circumstances of this tradiness, the Board of Trustees have asked me to devote my attention wholly to the expeditious completion of this holy task and to issue an appeal for funds for the said purpose.

Need I stress the duty that lies heavily on us in this respect! I request your early and generous co-operation in the matter. Your remittances may be addressed either in my name or in favour of the President, Sri Ramana Mantapa Nidhi.

Thank you,

Sri Ramanasramam,
April 18, 1966
16th Aradhana Day.

Mrs. FEROZA TALEYARKHAN

11/18

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PATHALALINGAM TEMPLE

Opening Ceremony

On 14th May, 1949

TELEGRAM

From : **The Honourable SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL**
Deputy Prime Minister of India, NEW DELHI.

To : **His Excellency Shri C. Rajagopalachariar,**
Governor-General of India, Camp.

NEW DELHI
13th May 1949

IMMEDIATE

PLEASE GONVEY TO FEROZA TALEYARKHAN MY BEST WISHES ON THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING CEREMONY OF PATHALA LINGAM TEMPLE STOP MAY IT CONTINUE TO SERVE THE SPIRITUAL NEEDS OF AN INCREASINGLY WIDER CIRCLE OF DEVOTEES.

WELCOME ADDRESS

H. E. Sri C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

(Governor-General of India)

on the occasion of the opening of Patalalingam Temple

On 14th May, 1949

Your Excellency, brothers and sisters,

My revered Guru, Ramanabhagavan's blessings have made this day a red letter day in my life and in the history of Tiruvannamalai. It is my proud privilege to welcome Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen on this unique occasion. The temple of Patala Linga where Sri Bhagavan Ramana Maharishi performed Tapasya in his early days will now be declared open by Your Excellency. It is our good fortune that Your Excellency as Head of the State guides the destinies of this land of ours, a spiritual home of Saints and Sages from time immemorial.

As everyone knows Sri Ramana Bhagavan was born in Tiruchuli. He was studying in Madura. Then he got an inner urge to realise the self. In his seventeenth year he got the clarion call from Lord Arunachala and left Madura for Tiruvannamalai and reached the latter place on 1—9—1896. From that time to the present day he adorns this place and radiates light and love all over the World.

After a few days of his arrival here, he made the temple of Patala Linga his sanctuary and started Tapas here. Some of the Bakthas visiting the temple had come to know of the young sage. They found that he was in deep samadhi with the lower part of his thighs bleeding caused by insect bites. From that day the World recognised his greatness and began to pay its homage. After sometime he left this for a garden, thence to Pavalak Kunru, to the Virupaksha cave, to Kandasramam and lastly he came to the present Ramanasramam after the death of his mother.

As a devotee of Sri Bhagavan I had a great desire to make all these sacred places of his birth, education, penance and present retreat as fitting monuments for the posterity to know and find true inspiration. The house at Tiruchuli where he was born has been acquired and Sri Bhagavan's portrait has been installed in it. The house at Madura where he first obtained the insight into self beyond birth and death has also been acquired. The Big temple of Mathurbutheeswara has been recently built in the peaceful surroundings of Ramanasramam and this will remain for all time as the seat of Light and learning.

Just as I was trying to renovate the temple of Patala Linga I had to overcome a lot of obstacles and my grateful thanks are due to Sri Omandur Ramaswamy Reddiar who helped me a good deal. With his help and Your Excellency's blessings I got the permission for renovating the dilapidated temple of Patala Linga. So far as the actual construction work is concerned I cannot adequately thank Mr. Jehanbux H. Tarapore who very magnanimously came forward to finance and have the work done under his instruction and supervision.

We are really very fortunate that Your Excellency has been pleased to accept the invitation to come to this distant place despite multifarious State duties. We are very grateful to Your Excellency for the kindness. I request Your Excellency be pleased to declare open the temple of Patala Linga.

Mrs. Feroza Taleyarkhan

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S CAMP

Bangalore, 19th May 1949.

Dear Feroza Sister,

I cannot tell you how immensely pleased I am that I was able to fulfil your desire last Saturday. This memorable occasion will remain green in my mind. I am deeply thankful to you for the part you have played through the silent inspiration of Sri Ramana Rishi in keeping religion before the people of the South.

Colonel B. CHATTERJEE
Military Secretary to The Governor-General

GOVERNOR GENERAL'S CAMP

Bangalore, 19 May, 1949.

Dear Srimathi Taleyarkhan,

I write to thank you very much indeed for the excellent arrangements which were made in connection with His Excellency the Governor General opening the Pathala Lingam Temple on the 14th May, 1949. Everything was spick and span and the function was successful in every way. His Excellency is fully aware of the great pains you took to make the occasion such a resounding success, and I can assure you that His Excellency is greatly appreciative of the thoroughness with which every minute detail connected with the memorable event was attended to.

With best regards to you and your sisters.

Tiruvannamalai,

15th May, 1949.

Dear Mrs. Feroza Taleyarkhan,

You have earned a world-wide reputation, lasting for ever, for your having renovated the temple of Sri Patalalinga, one of the sacred places where Sri Ramana Bhagavan did penance and obtained more insight into Self!

You have added to your good name for having made the renovated temple being open by His Excellency Sri C. Rajagopalachari, Governor-General of India.

Words fail to express my gratitude to you for your undaunted courage and the tender heart you have got, to feel pleasure in making others joyous by your ready help in fitting manner.

Dear Madam, you have won the high esteem of Sri Vallabai Patel who is next to the Premier in India.

I pray to my God, Sri Ramana Bhagavan, to bless you with long life, robust health and all good fortune in life!

Your sincerely,

Kalkanda (a) P. D. Mannar Chettiar

★

I am grately indebted to Mr. Tarapore for building the Patala Linga Temple and now again he has covered the upper portion and renovated the whole shrine; but for him I would not have been able to do anything.

My grateful thanks to dear Sri C. Loganathan for painting and renovating the Gopuram. Graciously he has given Rs. 2000/- towards the cost of it.

Ma. F. Taleyarkhan

PATHALALINGAM

KUMBHABHISHEKAM

Messages

S. RADHAKRISHNAN

RASHTRAPATHI BHAVAN,

June 7, 1965.

Places become sacred not because ages ago great people lived there but because we even today think of them and raise our own spiritual status.

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

60, BAZLULLAH ROAD,
TYAGARAYANAGAR MADRAS-17

3rd May 1965.

I have read my friend Feroza Taleyarkhan's appeal. What she has said there is true and deserves the response of good men.

SRI SATI GODAVARI MATAJI
SAKURI

RAHATA POST
AHMEDNAGAR

29-3-65.

Shri Mataji does remember you often and Shri Mother sends the Divine Blessings of Shri Baba with her best wishes for the noble work you have undertaken. May Shri Bhagwan bless you with success. Shri Mother feels very happy that you are so dutiful to your Master and take so much trouble to fulfil your work.

SHREE GURUDEV ASHRAM
Registered under the Bombay
Public Trust Act 1950

GAVDEVI-GANESHPURI,
P. O. Vajreshwari, Dist. THANA

March 21, 1965.

The place where such great saints reside become holy and vibrate with the divine shakti of their glorious souls. Sadhakas get its full benefit. The greatness of Bhagavan Ramana and Bhagavan Nityananda has become proverbial. Their silence was more eloquent than any intelligent discourse and it guided all those who went to them on the path of eternal peace. They are the only real Saviours of the suffering humanity. The advent of such true Masters, is a rare phenomenon and people like you who are fortunate in being blessed by their company and being associated with their life work, are really lucky. Ma. Taleyarkhan, you have been fortunate in having undergone both these phases of your tapasya for twelve years each.

Devarishi Narada in his Bhakti Sutra says that " The company of great souls is difficult to get, difficult to understand but is always fruitful."

One can get every thing in this world; but the company of the holy saints is hard to get. One who is fully merged in his real self and is completely detached, can alone lead worldly persons on the spiritual path. I am glad that you are devoting your life time in perpetuating the memory of Bhagavan Shri Ramana Maharshi who, like Bhagavan Nityananda, was one of the giants among such Siddhas.

May your sacred work be acclaimed by devotees and appreciated by God Almighty, bringing peace and bliss to all. You have my choicest blessings in your devotional mission.

May the Saint of Arunachala shower on you his grace in abundance.

K. KAMARAJ

8, TIRUMALAI PILLAI ROAD,
T'NAGAR, MADRAS-17

November 3, 1965

I am happy to know that Mrs. Taleyarkhan, a great devotee of Sri Ramana Maharshi has taken up the Maharshi Samadhi work, which will benefit the public, particularly the devotees to a great extent.

I send my best wishes for the success of her efforts.

JAYA CHAMARAJ WADIYAR
Governor of Madras

RAJ BHAVAN
MADRAS GOVERNOR'S CAMP P.O.,

July 10, 1965

I am happy to know that it is proposed to perform Kumbhabhishekam of Patala Linga shrine at Tiruvannamalai.

Many a saint of Tamilnad has sung in praise of Sri Arunachaleswarar of Tiruvanamalai. We have it said by Lord Siva in the *Skanda Purana* that "what cannot be acquired without endless pains - the true import of the Vedanta - is easily got by all who can either directly sight this Hill or even mentally think of it from afar". Sri Ramana Maharshi chose such a place for spiritual enlightenment which eventually became the scene of his activity and *mukti* and attracted large number of persons who came to have his *darshan* and profit by the teachings of his silence.

The Patala Linga in the temple is reputed to be the underground vault where Sri Ramana Maharshi performed *tapes* in the early stages and then, it has rightly become a holy and hallowed shrine. We have reason to be grateful to the many devotees for having helped in the construction of the shrine. It is in the fitness of things that arrangements are proposed for the daily worship of Patala Linga in the prescribed manner and the the performance of Kumbhabishekam. I wish efforts in this direction every success. May we realise the Glory of Arunachala in the words of Sri Ramana Maharshi.

> " Ocean of Nectar, full of Grace, engulfing the universe in Thy Splendour ! O Arunachala, the Supreme Itself ! be Thou the Sun and open the lotus of my heart in Bliss!''

SRI PRAKASA

VISHRANTI KUTIR
RAJPUR (DEHRA DUN)

June 7, 1965

I am very happy to learn that the Kumbabhishekam of the Pathalalingam shrine at Arunachalam in Tiruvannamalai, is being performed, and that arrangements are being made for the daily worship of Pathalalingam. It is a great and holy shrine hallowed further by the associations of Ramana Maharshi with it.

I hope that the appeal is being sent on behalf of the functions, will meet with ready response in the hearts of the devout. I send my best wishes for the success of the good cause.

S. L. SILAM
Lt.. Governor

RAJ NIVAS, PONDICHERRY
October 20, 1965

Those who visit the Arunachaleswar Temple would necessarily come to see the "Pathala Lingam" site with which is associated the memory of Bhagavan Sri Ramana who spent several days in the underground vault in deep absorption. It is proposed to make arrangements for daily worship of this "Pathala Lingam" in the prescribed manner. For this purpose, a sum of Rs. 20,000/- will be necessary for the 'Kumbabhishekam' ceremony and for setting up a trust to look after the poojas and the upkeep. Shrimati F. Taleyarkhan has appealed to devotees to send donations and is also bringing out a Souvenir to which she has invited business people to give advertisements which will go to swell this fund. I am confident that people will give all co-operation by responding to the appeal of the indefatigable sponsor, Smt. Taleyarkhan.

M. BHAKTAVATSALAM
Chief Minister

FORT ST. GEORGE
MADRAS-9
6th Nov. 1965

My dear Mrs. Taleyarkhan,

I offer my best wishes to you for the successful ceremony for Pathala Lingam Abishekam. I am happy that you have taken charge of the Samadhi at last. I wish you all the best and I pray for the Almighty's blessings to you.

R. VENKATARAMAN
Minister for Industries

FORT ST. GEORGE
MADRAS
December 21, 1965

Sri Ramana Maharishi's Ashram is an oasis of peace in this world of noise, haste and ceaseless striving for material possessions. Visitors to the Samadhi of Sri Maharishi feel a rush of quiet flowing into their heart. They also sense the serene presence of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharishi there. I heartily welcome your effort to put up a temple over the Samadhi of Sri Bhagavan Maharishi and a prayer hall for people seeking enlightenment.

V. RAMAIAH
Minister for Food

FORT ST. GEORGE
MADRAS-9

6-11-1965.

அன்புடையீர்,

அருளும் ஞானமும் நிறைந்து விளங்கியவர் மகான் ரமண மகரிஷி. வாழ்நாளில் பக்தி மார்க்கத்தைப் பரப்பும் அறிவுச் சுடராக அவர் விளங்கினார். தற்போது ரமணாஸ்ரமம் அவர் விட்டுச் சென்ற தெய்வப் பணியை தொடர்ந்து மேற்கொண்டுள்ளது.

திருவண்ணாமலை அருணாச்சலேஸ்வரர் ஆலயத்தில் ஆயிரக்கால் மண்டபத்தின் அருகிலுள்ள பாதாளலிங்க கோவிலில் தான் ரமண மகரிஷிக்கு ஞானோதயம் ஏற்பட்டது. அத்தகைய வழிபாட்டு ஆலயத்திற்கு கும்பாபிஷேகத் திருவிழா எல்லாம்வல்ல ஈசனின் இன்னருளால் இனிது நடந்தேற வேண்டுமென பிரார்த்திக்கின்றேன்.

R. KRISHNASWAMI
President
Tamilnad Congress Committee

SATHIAMURTHI BHAVAN,
54, GENERAL PATTERS ROAD,
MADRAS-2

4th November 1965

My dear Taleyarkhan

It is with profound pleasure I congratulate you on your successful endeavour culminating in the Kumbabhishekam of the Renovated Pathala Lingam Temple at Tiruvannamalai. Let me convey my great admiration for your tireless labour of love in the holy cause of Bhagavan Sri Ramana.

I am also happy to learn that Souvenir is being brought out to commemorate the auspicious occasion.

I heartily wish both the good ventures all success they richly deserve.

T. N. VENKATARAMAN
Manager-President
SRI RAMANASRAMAM

SRI RAMANASRAMAM P.O.
TIRUVANNAMALAI
SOUTH INDIA

It is a heart-warming occasion that dear Ma Taleyarkhan has undertaken to celebrate the Kumbhabhishekam of Patala Linga Shrine. I, on my behalf and on behalf of my family and the inmates of our Ashram, wish her all success and pray to Sri Bhagavan that the function may meet with tremendous success that it richly reserves.

It may be happily recalled that it was she who took upon herself the task of renovating the then neglected sacred place of Patala Linga in 1947. She completed the renovation in 1949 and also successfully celebrated the opening ceremony by Sri C. Rajagopalachari, the then Governor-General of India. Thus she made the Patala Linga shrine a world-renowned place of spiritual inspiration.

It is needless to say that Ma is a devout devotee of Sri Bhagavan and a staunch supporter of Sri Ramanasramam. After the Nirvana of Sri Bhagavan she gave her unstinted cooperation to the late Sri Niranjanananda Swamy, the then Sarvadhikari of the Ashram and after him to me, till now, in all matters concerning the Ashram affairs. She was with us not only on happy occasions but also at times of crises and has helped us come out successfully through trials and tribulations. We are also happy to have her as a Trustee on our Ashram Trust Board. May Sri Bhagavan bless her with long life to carry on her ceaseless service to Him and His devotees !

I am also happy to announce that she has presently been entrusted with another great task of completing the Ramana Mantap over the shrine of Sri Bhagavan and performing its Kumbhabhishekam. Need we doubt that she will complete this task also successfully !

My whole family, Ashramites and myself once again wish the function every success and pray that we may be blessed to have her association for years to come. May Sri Bhagavan shower His Gracious Blessings on her !

Colonel B. CHATTERJEE
Military Secretary
To the Governor-General

GOVERNMENT HOUSE
NEW DELHI

28th May 1949.

Dear Mrs. Taleyarkhan,

I am extremely sorry to hear from your letter of the 25th of the demise of your husband, and hasten to send you and your son Sohrab my heartfelt sympathy in the great loss you have sustained.

We felt no less thrilled than the public of Tiruvannamalai at witnessing the memorable event of the 14th ; all that we saw and heard on the occasion is still ringing in our ears. Personally I felt so purified in the elevating and sublime atmosphere of Lord Arunachaleswara's Temple, and I know the other members of the Governor-General's party shared a similar experience. We all consider ourselves twice blessed at having had the opportunity of visiting the Holy Pilgrim Centre which has been made holier still by Shri Ramana Maharishi's association with it.

The book referred to in your letter has not been received yet, but directly it arrives I will give it to His Excellency and also write to its author as desired by you.

With best regards to you from us all, and thank you once again for all the help and assistance you gave in arranging His Excellency's visit and for your great kindness and affection to us during our short but pleasant stay at Tiruvannamalai.

बिरला हाउस,
नई दिल्ली,

सितम्बर २७, १९६५.

बहिन तलयार खां एक उच्च विचार की भक्त तथा सन्त स्वभाववाली धर्मप्रेमी परोपकारिणी महिला है। पूज्य महात्मा रमण महर्षि के वे अनन्य भक्तों में हैं और रमणाश्रम की निरन्तर सेवा उनके द्वारा होती रही है। उनका यह सेवा-कार्य चिर-स्मरणीय रहेगा। मेरा उनसे कई वर्षा से परिचय है और मेरी हार्दिक शुभ-कामनायें उनके साथ है। भगवान् से प्रार्थना है कि वे बहुत दिनों तक इसी प्रकार सेवा-कार्य करती रहें।

जुगुल किशोर बिरला

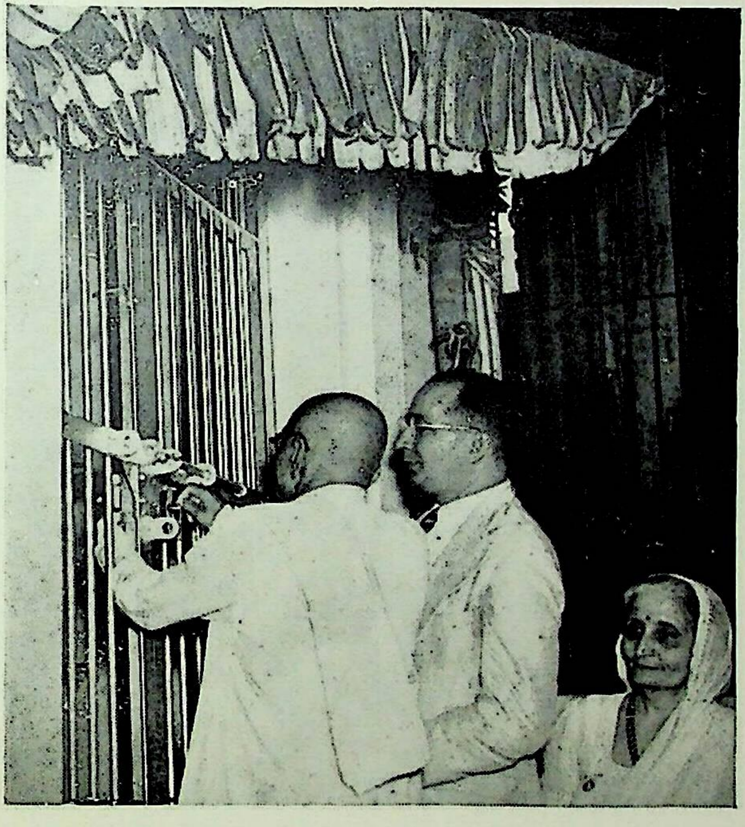
T. S. MUTHUKUMARASWAMI MUDALIAR
President,
Co-operative Land Mortgage Bank Ltd.,
& Ex-Municipal Chairman.

TIRUVANNAMALAI

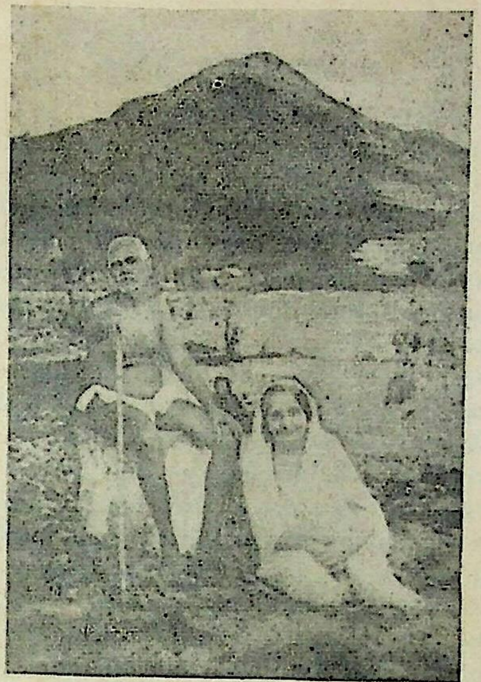
20-12-1965

It is in the fitness of things that this holy and historic temple of Sri Arunachaleswara should have provided the setting for Sri Ramana Maharshi's advent as the exemplar and embodiment of the ancient spirituality of this country. The word 'Arunachala' was the prevenient call that drew him to this place. His first manifest state of realisation was in this shrine. This happy combination of our traditional and institutional spirituality with the exemplication of it in the personal realisation of the Maharshi is being appropriately commemorated by this renovation and and Kumbabhishekam of Pathala Linga. When this idea was first mooted in 1949, I was a trustee of the temple and gave what humble encouragement I could to the project. I am blessed to be alive to see its fulfilment, thanks to the zealous and unremitted efforts of Mrs. Taleyarkhan.

Opening Ceremony



Sri. C. Rajagopalachari declares open the Patalalinga Temple.



Sri Ramana's Miracles

MA. FEROZA TALEYARKHAN,
Sri Ramanasramam.

For some years after my arrival here, I never moved out anywhere beyond the Ashram and my house. Then, one day, some asked Sri Bhagavan about the Patala Linga, in the great Temple of Arunachaleswara in the Town. Sri Bhagavan spoke very highly of the place, and described it so vividly and interestingly that it made me very much eager to see it. Swamiji Sri Ramanananda Sarasvati (whom I called Naina) agreed to take me; and the next morning we went to the Temple where, under the 1,001 pillared Mantapam lies the tiny cell of the Patala Linga.

Its condition was very bad, all broken down, heaps of sand and rubbish all piled up with smell of filthy excretions so strong that I could not go near. I was upset to see so sacred a place in such a bad condition.

When we returned to Sri Bhagavan, He enquired about our impressions and Naina gave a full account of the condition of the shrine, and how people were going there and polluting it. Bhagavan said, "See! As though there were no other place to go to but this sacred one where a Great Sage's Samadhi is! why should they go and pollute it?" He went on for a long time, speaking sadly, and - though I really do not know, something within me spoke out: "Oh: Oh; If such a sacred place where Bhagavan sat is in such a state, surely then will I do it up"; "Oh, indeed, will you" said Bhagavan, "Yes I will" said I. I had, of course, no idea of how or when I would be able to do it; I was new to the South and I knew practically no one in Madras where I could find the necessary help. But wonderful to relate, Sri Bhagavan at once began to perform miracles. I went to Madras where lived Kaikoo Parakh - a friend of our's whom I knew, and on hearing of my difficulties, he at once said, "Be ready, I will come to fetch you at 4 P.M." I was ready and he took me straight to meet dear and loving people Mr. & Mrs. Tarapore and their two beautiful daughters. They received me as though we had always known each other, and later their residence became my second home and is so to this day.

Mr. Tarapore saw at once that the renovation work would be difficult for me, and so very sweetly he said, "Leave it to me, I will do it, you can go home". In this way, My Bhagavan performed the miracle, by giving me through the Patala Linga work, both Parents and the second HOME. The Patala Linga Work went on silently and was completed though the Ashram had nothing to do with it. The then Governor-General, Sri Rajagopalachari, very kindly came to open it and made it a memorable and successful occasion still remembered by many to-day.

It had been for me the greatest privilege to have been chosen as an instrument for this work of restoring the Patala Linga where as a boy first my Lord Ramana had sat unaware of body, or smells, of insects-bite and other hardships, and although the work did not go absolutely smoothly-some people created trouble, feeling as I did that I had been given the work by Sri Bhagavan HIMSELF, I paid no attention, knowing HIM TO BE WITH ME. During the first time when the work was going on, the officers, my helpers and I were full of joy and every evening when we used to return from the Temple, we gave an account to Bhagavan of what had been done during the day. Sri Bhagavan would then begin narrating some interesting stories about the Patala Linga, and you can imagine our delight in listening to HIM. Alas, the Kumbhabhishekam could not be completed before Sri Bhagavan left the body, but by HIS GRACE-Love, encouragement and money poured in, and to-day the great task is successfully and beautifully competed. WITH HIS GRACE we will now be having the final sacred Ceremoney of the Kumbhabhishekam which will inaugurate regular puja at the Shrine.

So ends my work of Patala Linga, so graced by Bhagavan; now I thought of sitting back quietly. But He had not finished with me, He proceeded to work another miracle for me. How strange are HIS WAYS?

On the day He left His body I had promised before the public that I would build the Samadhi befitting to Him and not a small one as they wanted to. My prayers went up to Him that I might have the privilege of building a fitting Samadhi and the Mandapam. The Ashram authorities desired however to do the work themselves and began to collect funds for the same. After some years, the Samadhi Shrine got almost stuck, and though various people tried to continue the work, each time something seemed to stop them and the work came to a standstill. The trustees seemed to lose interest and did nothing about it. Then came the miracle. Just as the work of Patala Linga was finished and I was free, the President and the Trustees of the Ashram requested me to undertake the Samadhi Work. What a joyous day that was for me. Bhagavan had heard and granted my prayer and inspite of everything I was to have the joy and honour of undertaking this work. The Ashram Committee made me solely responsible for everything and offered their co-operation. With His grace the work has started in earnest with craftsmen and buying of materials. Now, what we need is atleast one lakh of Rupees.

May I pray and hope that all those who read this will give their blessings and their mite towards this work of love which will be an ever-lasting memorial of the Love and Peace that radiated from Sri Bhagavan.

Every reminder of Love and Peace is so much needed in this world to-day of war and chaos, and may this memorial in the place where He lived and radiated joy for so many years be a centre of Peace for the world for all times. Sri Bhagavan was so considerate, kind and loving, and he taught us in many ways. His Heart glowed with merciful love for all things, He breathed Peace of incorruptible purity, and sweetened our lives. He showed me that He knew us through and through and indirectly guided us, and still does. There is one story which I would tell to illustrate this.

One day Sri Murganar Swami, most devout devotee of Bhagavan who has written a number of poems and expositions on the subject of Shri Bhagavan, brought some thing he had written. After perusal, Sri Bhagavan asked the attendants to give it to the office. Immediately they returned it saying, "It can't be printed, there is no money". Immediately I said I shall pay for it. "Oh, will you?" Bhagavan then said to the attendant "Go and give it back to the office and tell them she will pay." We all sat quiet then and after a time Bhagavan started talking. I was not sure why, or whether He felt that out of impulse I had offered; but this is what He spoke. Those words are fixed in my mind till this day. "When through excitement or an impulse you give your word you never fulfill it. It is a great crime", then He went on to say, "All your faults are forgiven: Murder, robbery, fighting, etc., etc., but one thing alone will not be forgiven: Ingratitude to one who has helped you in your great trials and tribulations. If you forget that, God will never forgive you, for this is the greatest SIN." I felt that Bhagavan must be thinking that only out of impulse I had said it..........Immediately I came home, fetched the money and brought it to Bhagavan "Go and give it to the office" In this manner did our LORD train us and put us on the right path.

Every act of His was Divine, He was brilliant as the Sun, loving as the Mother, and kind and benevolent as Father. There was that rich magnificent loving bearing, which drew lakhs to HIM. Let us all pray for ever, and try to lead a life full of purpose and meaning, sincerly, honestly and ever loving as He was. Again would I ask for His Grace and your good wishes for my blessed work for our LORD.

OM
NAMO BHAGAVATE SRI RAMANAYA
SALUTATION TO BHAGAVAN SRI RAMANA

Kumbhabhishekam of Patala-Lingam

(Where Bhagavan Ramana sat in Supreme Tapas)

Sri VISWANATHA SWAMI,
Sri Ramanasramam

What is Patala-Lingam and what does its Kumbhabhishekam mean?

At the South-west corner of the thousand pillared Mantapam (hall)[1] within the premises of the Temple of Arunachala, Tiruvannamalai of hoary antiquity, there is an under-ground cellar, reached by a flight of steps and in it is a beautiful lingam (emblem of Siva) installed by whom and when nobody knows. That is the Patala-Lingam, the Lingam of the Nether Regions, a symbol of Siva, the Supreme Being, standing for the Abyss of Light at the Source of all creation. I have heard from my Master, Bhagavan Sri Ramana that the Lingam was there even before the construction of the Temple of Arunachala. It was at the south-west corner of this underground cellar with the Patala-Lingam located at its centre, the world-famous Seer and Teacher of our times, Bhagavan Sri Ramana sat down, as a boy of seventeen, in effortless deep meditation (Nirvikalpa-Samadhi), unconscious of his body and surroundings. From Madurai, the well-known place of pilgrimage (in South India) where he was studying in the Matriculation class in a High School, he was called to Arunachala by Grace divine.

Born on the 30th December, 1879, at Tiruchuzhi, a charming sacred place of Siva, more than forty miles south of Madurai, he had his early education there. His father, Sundaram Iyer, a pleader of distinction by profession and his mother Alagammal were both remarkably high-souled and dignified, very hospitable and charitable. After the death of his father, Ramana, a lad of twelve, with his elder and younger brothers and a sister had to shift to Madurai to continue their studies under the care of a paternal uncle.

The young boy Ramana, then known as Venkataraman, had somehow an inborn remembrance of the holy name Arunachala springing up from the depths of his being and reverberating within from his very early years of discretion.

As he grew up, he associated it with the concept of Supreme Divinity, unaware of the existence on Earth of a Holy Hill and Divinity bearing that very name,

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[1] The Thousand-pillared Mantapam (hall) is the first construction seen on entering the Temple by the majestic eastern Entrance-Tower with the superb Hill of Arunachala situated as its beautiful background.

Arunachala[2], known in Tamil as Tiruvannamalai, the Hill of the Holy Beacon. That information regarding the existence and locality of such a place of Pilgrimage, he got from a relative, just some time before he was called for good to Arunachala.

Ramana, as a boy, was healthy, strong and cheerful. Even from his childhood he attracted all by some indescribable loveliness about him. He was not particularly attached to anybody or anything except Arunachala. But that was his sacred secret which none else knew. As he grew up, he happened to go through a thrilling devotional work in Tamil prose, "The livies of the Sixty-three Saints (of Siva)" and was profoundly moved by it. As a natural consequence, he became a regular visitor of Sri Minakshi-Sundareswara Temple near-by. Day after day he stood there facing Velli-Ambalam Nataraja[3] and prayed with flaming fervour for His Grace and utter self-surrender. The absolutely earnest prayer of the beautifully innocent and pure lad was granted. The subtle Touch of Divine Grace made him suddenly unaware of his body and surroundings and a blisfully pure Awareness Absolute possessed his entire being.

This unique experience completely upset the usual life of the boy in his teens. Elders at home and teachers at school, who had no inkling at all of the tremendous transformation Ramana had undergone within, chided him for absent-mindedness and negligence.

Soon after, Ramana had another experience which further aggravated the situation making scholastic life impossible. He had a sudden and unaccountable apprehension of imminent death which urged him face the problem and have it solved then and there by direct experience. He lay down flat in a small room on the first floor of the house with his eyes closed and breath held motionless and vividly visualized the process of death and cremation of the body thereafter. "Now, what" he probed deeply within himself, "after the destruction of the form of Venkataraman?" Immediately flashed forth a really satisfactory answer to the query in the form of a continuous and permanent experience of formless Awareness which remained with him for ever as the One Real Self underlying all manifestation.

It was at this critical juncture of his life, Ramana was called away from home by Arunachala to make him the unique World-Teacher of the present age. Leaving a letter behind saying that he had gone away in search of his Father as impelled by Him and that none need grieve over it as the pursuit was really meritorious, he started for Tiruvannamalai (by railway) and reached his real home on September 1, 1896.[4]

Alighting from the train at Tiruvannamalai Ramana went direct to the Temple of Arunachala and walked straight to the Sanctum Sanctorum (Lingam) and reported himself to his Father, saying "I have come as directed by Thee. Thy Will be Done".

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[2] Bhagavan Ramana has explained the Name Arunachala, made up of the letters A, RU and NA along with the ending Achala as the Transcendental Existence-Consciousness-Bliss-Absolute, the immutable Self of all.

[3] Velli-Ambalam means the Silver Expanse, referring to the Pure Awareness at the Thousand-petalled lotus (Sahasrara) at the top of the head. This Nataraja, in the immediate vicinity of Sundareswara, has his right foot lifted in dance. At Chidambaram and other places, he is usually found with his left foot raised. The dance signifies the Cosmic play of the Lord as well as his dance within the hearts of all beings as Pure Awareness.

[4] On his way to Tiruvannamalai, he had to halt at Tirukoilur, a remarkable place of pilgrimage for the Saivaites as well as Vaishnavites, situated on the banks of the River Pennai, 20 miles south of Tiruvannamalai; and there he had a glorious vision of Arunachala as an endless Expanse of Divine Effulgence at the Temple of Athulyanatha (Siva) built over the river-girdled rock of the locality. It was later known that the famous poet-Saint Jnana Sambandha had a similar experience of Arunachala from the outer precincts of that Temple.

From the Sanctum, he came out and walked to the Eastern Entrance as if in trance. As he came out of the Temple, a barber offered him his services. Ramana had a clean shave of his head near the Ayyankulam Tank and there he discarded his clothes, sacred thread, a few coins and a packet of sweets given by an old lady which were all his earthly belongings at that moment. Wearing only a cod-piece (kaupina) torn from his loin-cloth, he walked back to the Temple. His inner absorption was so gripping that even the thought of taking a bath after the shave did not occur to him. But Arunachala, his benevolent Father, brought about a sharp shower of rain giving His son a refreshing bath.

Entering the Temple again, Ramana walked up the steps of the huge Thousand Pillared Mantapam and sat down on the stone-dais at its centre. This huge Hall with its columns of Pillars is usually an unfrequented spot.[6] Yet, urchins running up and down eveywhere in play, found out this strange young boy, Ramana, seated there with closed eyes, and in their irrepressible zeal for mischief pelted stones at the mad boy as they thought him to be. Though none of the stones hit the mark, Ramana looked about for a secluded corner to escape the attentions of the imps. Gracious Arunachala had such a place already reserved for the undisturbed tapas of His dear child, at the underground cellar of Patala-Lingam. Bhagavan Ramana with his innate spirit of utter self-surrender was fully statisfied with the place as ideally suited for his purpose.

Walking down the steps he entered the cellar of Patala-Lingam and sat at the south-west corner of it, invisible from outside, deeply engrossed in irresitible Nirvikalpa-Samadhi, unaware of the darkness and dampness, the bite of vermin or the sting of mosquitoes abounding in that uncared for place. Ramana did not know whether it was day or night; he never felt hunger, thirst or anything pertaining to the body or mind, as his Samadhi was not at all a mental effort but the experience of a tremendous attraction from within, from the centre of his being which permitted no mental movement of any kind. He was all the while blissfully aware of the One Self of all and unaware of anything else.

Of this extraordinary, though absolutely normal from his own state of being, absorption in and as the Self of Ramana his unique disciple, Ganapathi Muni, a great yogi and Sanskrit poet of rare excellence has sung as follows in immortal verse[7]:

"In Thee alone is found the Supreme inherence in the Self of all, in Thee alone the immaculate clarity of pure intellect. As the ocean is the reservior of all water, Thou art of all perception (experience).

"Thou, my Lord, of great renown, didst obtain in Thy seventeenth year, the direct

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5. A three stringed garland-like thread knotted together and worn by the twice-born (dwijas) denoting their adherence to Vedic Tradition.

6. Only once a year, a day previous to Ramana's birth-day in December-January, when the moon is with the constellation Arudra, the image of Nataraja is brought our from within the Temple placed on the central dais of the Hall and worshipped on a grand scale. This great festivity attended by thousands of devotees is known as the Arudra darsanam. That the temple-elephant was housed at that hall has been referred to humorously by Bhagavan Ramana, in one of his reminiscent moods: "The elephant and myself were the sole occupants of that huge hall; sometimes I have heard the noise of my elder brother taking his huge meal of twigs and leaves or the sound of his deep breathing in the stillness of nights".

7. Ramana Gita Ch. XI published with Sanskrit text and English translation by Sri Ramanasram, Tiruvannamalai.

experience of the Supreme Self, unattainable even for devoted spiritual aspirants (yogis).

" Who could describe Thy State of Unity, in which all objectivity and diversity (so real to us) are, to Thee, nothing but shadow ?

"Thou art, hence, the only Refuge of beings struggling for life in the turbulent waters of mudane existence, tossed hither and thither and yet aspiring to get over the poignant misery of worldly life.

" By dint of divine vision granted by grace, I see Thee again and again as Subrahmanya, the Son of God in mortal garb, the fore-most of the well-established in Ultimate Reality".

It was this profound scholar of extraordinary brilliance and incisive intellect, a gifted sanskrit poet, the many sided excellence of whose prose and poetry has not yet been properly understood and appreciated, a genius of all-round talent, a great yogi and Tapaswin who devoted his whole life for tapas, for the uplift of humanity through the raising up of this Sacred Land from its depths of poverty, misery, bondage and ignorance, that announced to the world, as early as 1907, Ramana, the Supreme world-Teacher of our times, giving him the appropriate name Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi[8]. And he hymned a Thousand Verses in Praise of Uma. The Mother of the Universe) in gratitude for having directed him to Ramana, the Embodiment of Divine Grace.

Ganapathi-Muni, known as "Nayana" at Ramanashram and everywhere, was a broad-minded and large-hearted Sage, who was blessed by Divine Grace with a very dynamic manifestation of Kundalini. Yet he did not stir out to engage himself in outward activity for the redemption of the motherland because as a true disciple of Bhagavan Ramana, he wished to get normally established in the State of Absolute Unity before doing anything else. Bhagavan most probably thought that the mighty thought-force of this extraordinary man was enough contribution for the welfare of all, as it would take hold of suitable instruments to fulfil the various aspects of the work. In daily life, so many persons were getting spiritually ignited by this Rishi blazing forth spontaneously on account of his constant experience of Kundalini, which was becoming more and more rarified as subtle spiritual glory in his later years. His literary contributions are themselves great manifestations of Grace Divine admired by such eminent spiritual giants as Sri Ramana and Sri Aurobindo. In short no one could remain in his presence without getting spiritually electrified. Early devotees of Bhagavan Ramana know very well what great regard and love Master had for this simply superb devotee and disciple. He and his brother Ramana are the Twin guardian Divinities, representing the two main channels of traditional unfoldment and fulfilment, appearing from age to age for the redemption of erring humanity and for the welfare of all creation.

To take up the trend from this very important and therefore unavoidable digression, it took more than two years for Ramana to come back to our world and lead a normal human life as one of us. His coming back from his transcendental state of Absolute Non-differentiation to stay with for more than half a century as a Sahaja-Siddha is the greatest blessing bestowed upon humanity by Divinity. But is humanity receptive enough to benefit by this very rare Spiritual influence in its pristine purity? Humanity could solve all its problems, if it but cares to listen to Ramana, Love incarnate, dancing yet steadfast in every heart and guiding all at every step and taking all to the Supreme Abode of Blessedness.

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[8] 'Bhagavan' refers to his superhuman divinity, 'Ramana' meansLove and Bliss incarnate and 'Maharshi' denotes his being an original Seer of Ultimate Reality. Ramana was only twenty-seven then.

Though Ramana changed his residence within the limits of Arunachala from time to time, the sole purpose of his stay with us was and is to help us on in our spiritual quest and grant us the vision of the One Self of all. This vision or at least the clear grasp of essential Unity behind all appearance of diversity lies at the root of all well-being. This has been the message of all men of Light from time immemorial. And in our age Ramana is directing us all to recognize our real nature, as the one indivisible Self of all and find our Oneness with all creation. Spontaneous universal love goes along with this Vision of the basic unity, fusing in love every form of manifested life. What else is blessedness?

Bhagavan Ramana had as his abode the Virupaksha cave on the eastern flank of Arunachala for about seventeen years and then the Skandasram for nearly six years. Bhagavan's mother spent her last years, as a Sannyasini, with her enlightened son, at the Virupaksha cave and Skandasram and got liberated from the cycle of births and deaths by His Grace. At the time of her death at Skandasram in May 1922, Bhagavan sat near her for twelve hours, from morning eight to evening eight, placing one hand on her head and the other on her chest, directing his whole attention upon her and liberating her Consciousness from the trammels of separate individuality.

Her body was not cremated as usual but interred on the southern slopes of Arunachala and her place of Samadhi served as the nucleus around which Ramanasram grew up year after year as Bhagavan had changed his residence from Skandasram to the small thatched hut over his mother's Samadhi in the middle of December 1922, in a very casual way without the least forethought or plan. So many from all over India and abroad had to resort to him for spiritual enlightenment and peace and Bhagavan intuitively chose a more spacious place for his unplanned mission.

There are now the beautiful Temple built over his mother's samadhi with an excellent granite Sri Chakra Meru[9] installed at the Sanctum of Mathri-Bhuteswara, Bhagavan's Samadhi Shrine under construction, Bhagavan's Audience Hall, the Ashram Garden and Well, Kitchen and Dining-hall, the Cow-shed, Office and Book-stall and the place where Bhagavan lived the last three and a half months beginning from January 1950, Guest-house and rooms for inmates and visitors, Veda-Patasala (Veda-School), all these with Arunachala, Siva-Lingam shaped, as back-ground on the north, constitute Sri Ramanashram of today. Most of the above constructions came into existence under the un-tiring, vigilant supervision of Swami Niranjanananda, Bhagavan's younger brother, Life-President and Secretary of Sri Ramanasram.

The tremendous driving force behind the celebration of the Kumbhabhishekam of Matribhuteswara Temple in February 1949, was Swami Niranjanananda, who was very particular to search for and get the best materials and the best talent for any work undertaken and who never spared himself or his assistants in the execution of any undertaking big or small. Though quick-tempered and impulsive also, he knew in his heart of hearts that it was Bhagavan's grace and power alone that was responsible for every achievement. Having fulfilled his duty in the mysterious scheme of Bhagavan he merged in the Supreme, peacefully on the night of Thai-Poosam full-moon, with the chanting of Veda-parayanam and devotional hymns by devotees.

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[9] Sri-Chakra is a representation of the main principles and forces operating in the Universe with the Supreme and his Divine Conscions Force at the centre. The Meru-type of it is shaped like a Hill with its square base and Peak (Bindu) over the central Triangle.

Bhagavan lived at the present Sri Ramanasram premises for twenty-seven years from the middle of Dec. 1922 to the middle of April 1950, spreading his silent influence all over the world.

Countless are the flashes of grace that have emanated from Ramana all these years and during the first half of his stay at Arunachalam, at the Temple, Gurumoortham and on the Hill, to relieve suffering of every kind and to bestow on devotees the vision of all-pervading divinity residing for ever at the heart of all creation. Ramana was the very embodiment of Grace Divine and as such every look, smile, word or any movement of that impersonal Personality had a thrilling effect about it; and his Silence was so vast and calm, charming and all-powerful-being the best indicator of the Supreme Reality at the core of every being.

And we have the Literary Testament left by him as well-mostly the over-flowing of His Grace at the request of some devotee or other, "Who am I",[10] Five Hymns to Arunachala, Upadesa-Sara (Quintessence of All Teaching) in verse form, in four Indian languages (Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam), Forty verses on Existence with its Appendix, translations in Tamil verse and prose of the works of Sankara and other men of Light and stray verses mainly in Sanskrit and Tamil. The Collected Works of Ramana Maharshi and Talks with Ramana Maharshi have been published by Sri Ramanasram, Tiruvannanalai.

The physical and personal aspect of this great medium of Divine illumination, Peace and Bliss came to an end on the evening of April, 14, 1950, but yet the operation of its Grace is intensely felt even now by so many old devotees as well as newcomers to Arunachala and earnest seekers living anywhere on the globe who attune their heart to that Self of all.

Ramana is the blissful Awareness, the non-dual immortal Self of all and Grace is its constant and spontaneous resplendence. It is ever there as the Heart at the Heart. It is for us to open ourselves to its influence by vigilant Self-enquiry and utter self-surrender.

Every place and incident connected with this remarkable manifestation of Divine Grace on earth has its sanctity and potency imbedded in it of spreading spiritual enlightenment and healing. The place of his birth at Tiruchuzhi and the house at Madurai, where Ramana had his first intuitive recognition of the One deathless Self of all, have been recovered and made places of worship.[11] The mango-tree-cave, Virupaksha cave and Skandarasram on the Hill of Light (Arunachala) are already places of pilgrimage. The hill and its vicinity have been sanctified by the presence of Ramana and they breathe around his rarified air of spiritual fragrance.

There is his Asram at Arunachala serving as a haven of Spiritual felicity to the world-weary and restless souls. The Temple over his mother's Samadhi is a spot of perennial grace reminding us of the potency of Ramana's touch and look. The shrine over his Samadhi is under constru-tion and he actually looks at us and smiles from his portrait placed on his sofa at the Asram-hall.

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[10] It is very interesting to note that this teaching to Sivaprakasam Pillai of Chidambaram was given when Bhagavan was only a lad of twenty one.

[11] Known as "Sundara-Mandiram", in remembrance of his parents and "Sri Ramana Mandiram" respectively.

In this context the place where young Ramana's great Tapas began at Arunachala for the welfare of all beings-the Patala-Lingam-has its significance. Making it a place of daily traditional worship is nothing but an expression of the gratitude of humanity to Ramana for bringing almost within its reach, as it were, the hidden Reality of the One immutable Self of all, baffling all by its very simplicity and subtlety. We stand in deep awe and reverence of heart before that Seat of effortless constant Tapas, very rare to come across on confused and ignorant Earth at any time or clime.

The formal inauguration of the daily worship of Patala Lingam with the aid of wonderfully potent Mantras, rituals and ceremonial worship is known as Kumbhabhishekam. Those of us who have had the good fortune of witnessing the Kumbhabhishekam of Matribhuteswara,[12] known what a grand and thrilling festival it is. Kumbhabhishekam means bathing the deity concerned with consecrated waters (worshipped for a number of days) poured from the top of the shrine tower over the Sanctum. Though that is the culminating and main function of a Kumbhabhishekam, preceding it is an immense religious function calling forth all forms of ceremonial worship, homas (oblations in flames) and the chanting of all the Vedas, Upanishads and Puranas or at least selections from them. Everything held sacred and holy in Eternal Ancient Tradition finds a place in a Kumbhabhishekam. In the Tamil-speaking south, the singing of Hymns of the Saivaite and Vaishnavite Saints and of Tirupugazh of Arunagirinatha also find their place in a Kumbhabhishekam as in daily Temple-worship, as they are revered as Scriptures in Tamil.

During the performance of this Kumbhabhishekam and later during the daily Puja (worship) of Patala-Lingam, the attention of every devotee and visitor to the Temple of Arunachala will get directed to Bhagavan Ramana, the unique World-Teacher of our age. And that will be of immense good to everyone as Ramana has brought Heaven nearer the reach of mortals as never before in the religious history of humanity.

Arunagirinatha, the renowned and gifted poet-saint of Tiruvannamalai, is remembered with reverence, as one approaches the Kambathu-Ilayanar Temple[13] situated south of the Thousand-Pillared Mantapam or the Gopurathu-Ilayanar temple, where the Saint disgusted with his early sensual life, jumped down from the top of the Tower, to kill himself, but was miraculously saved by Kumara, who that very moment completely transformed the repentant soul into the foremost of his devotees. The four Tamil Saints and others of the galaxy of the Sixty-Three Saints have their places in South Indian Temples of Siva, just as Vaishnavite devotees of distinction have their places in Vaishnavite Temples.[14]

Even so, it is but appropriate that Bhagavan Ramana, in whom the Spirit of Arunachala found its fullest expression, has a place of worship in the Temple of Arunachala where his tapas (the spontaneous glow of His Reality) is honoured and worshipped as the Patala-Lingam, the endless effulgence at the base or source of all creation.

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[12] The name of the Lingam over Bhagavan's mother's Samadhi meaning God in the form of the Mother.

[13] It was here Kumara (the younger son of Siva) appeared before King Proudhadeva Raya as prayed for by Arunagiri, His gifted devotee.

[14] The place of special honour and worship accorded to Saint Manikya Vachakar near Nataraja (Saivate Temples) and that given to Andal (Kodai) in Vaishnavite Temples is well-known in South India.

Ramana, may we call back to mind, was born with the remembrance of Arunachala, was called back home (Arunachala) in his seventeenth year and was swept off by the delightful flood of divine Grace which completely dissolved his entity into Itself. Born thus as the transcendental Self of all and established on the throne of the Heart, he shed his grace all about, within and without, bringing back to the One Eternal Source everyone who had the good fortune to feel drawn to him in anyway whatsoever.

Ramana shone before the whole world during the first half of this (twentieth) century as the Blissful Light Eternal, the Love Supreme embracing within its fold every being animate or otherwise. Through the enthralling beauty and sweetness of his wonderful personality defying description, he was and is the delightful Awareness Pure, the One Eternal Self of all, the Ultimate Reality behind ever-changing forms appearing and disappearing with no reality of their own but that of the substratum.

Whatever we do to bring back to memory such a great being-who walked and talked as any one of us and was our dearest friend and yet remained at heart the One Life of all Life, Light of all lights and Absolute Impersonal Love bearing no differentiation and knowing no fluctuation, as it belonged to the realm of Pure Spirit, devoid of all limitations of thought-forms which alone ignorant man is conversant with is but an expression of our heart's homage to that mysterious Being who transformed every being by his mere Presence, look, smile and every tiny movement of his body, senses or mind.

May that Gracious Light and Love which shone through the Vehicle of the Form of Ramana and which is the one common Reality of all of us, shine forth for ever, purifying every heart and making universal love a possibility even on our stubbornly stupid and strife-torn Earth-Consciousness.

Endless be our heart's allegiance to the Holy Feet of Ramana, the Resplendent Self of all, shining for ever at the heart of the ignorant as well as the regenerate!

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Om

Dedication to Bhagavan Sri Ramana

Patala Lingam

SRI ACHARYASWAMY,
Bombay.

Sri Patala Lingam: Tiruvannamalai the Ancient and Holy place where Sri Ramanashramam, the sacred abode of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi is situated at the foot of Sri Arunachalam mountain of mythological fame, is the stronghold of many a cave and shrine suitable for practising penance, samadhi and other allied disciplines.

Sri Patala Lingam is one of the foremost out of them, because even as the sages in the past had utilized it for their purposes, Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharishi has consecrated same by His August presence When Bhagavan in response to Divine call left Madurai and reached Tiruvannamalai via Tirukoilur, he at once rushed to Sri Arunachala temple, and squatted on the steps of the temple. Looking at this curious figure both the preisthood and devotees were not only startled but took him to be an object of fun, laughter and ridicule. The youngsters went to the extent of pelting stones at Him. To avoid this molestation, Bhagavan looked around him and sought shelter in the Holy subternanean shrine of Patala Lingam under the canopy of the thousand pillared mantapam in the compound of Shri Arunachalam temple.

Mrs. Taleyarkhan one of the seniormost disciples and devotees of Sri Bhagavan who has been rendering all possible moral and material assistance, for broadcasting the name, fame and reputation of Sri Ramanashram and matters connected with it, and for the promotion of its various activities, thought it desirable to renovate the Patala Lingam shrine and with the co-operation of her colleague Sri. Tarapore actually succeeded in performing the said ceremony in due course.

According to her and many other disciples, devotees, admirers and visitors what remains to be done now is the performance of the Kumbhabhishekam ceremony in order to perpetuate the memory of Bhagavan's stay there.

She has already issued an appeal for funds necessary for the aforesaid ceremony, and I as one of the seniormost disciples of Sri Bhagavan Ramanamaharshi and a well-wisher of Sri Ramanashramam earnestly request all concerned to donate liberally for this laudable cause to ensure success.

It is needless to state here that my request is extended not only to the religious-minded people of this country but also to Bhagavan's admirers all over the world.

May Mrs. Taleyarkhan's sincere efforts be crowned with complete success with the Grace of Sri Bhagavan.

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Sri Bhagavan and The Pathala Linga

Sri Justice M. ANANTANARAYANAN,
High Court, Madras.

We live by Symbols. Symbols are not Truth, and when the mind is free of them, spontaneously and without the effort to be free, we have crossed the border of a kingdom that held us entranced. But as all things help the pilgrim, the beauty of a falling leaf, a cloud at sunset or a smile, symbols too might have helped him. It is true that *Arunachala* is in ourselves; it is also true that a strange peace descends upon him who is sensitive to the place, *Arunachala.* The bare rock is the 'Pillar of Fire,' when we look with 'inward-turned vision.'

II

It is for this reason that men have turned to symbols, in all ages and worlds; that, sometimes, Symbols have been of sustenance, in the darkness of vast suffering. The *Linga* is a symbol of *Siva* and *Shakti*, of the Greative Force held within itself as Being. The *Pathala Linga* is the place to which Sri Ramana came as a young boy, and sat in absorbed meditation, shattered, by Ecstasy, oblivious of the ants and vermin that crawled beneath his legs, and inflicted bites that turned into sores by neglect. In the book *Self-Realization* there is a vivid description of a person who intruded into this dark recess, at the bidding of Sri Seshadriswami who directed him to the 'Brahmanaswami'. He saw the dim figure of the young Ramana in meditation, with curled finger-nails and matted hair.

III

It is good that such a place should be consecrated. For as I have said, to those who have outgrown 'Projection', the inward climate is itself ever luminous, ever a speaking silence. But it is true in equal measure that a Tavern way stain us, and that there is help in wise association [*Sat Sangh*]. I gather from the most authentic of sources, that Sri Bhagawan himself felt that an intuition beyond himself had taken him to the *Pathala Linga*, for his absorbed meditation of many days. A mighty force of spirit was conserved here.

IV

'The ending of Thought is the beginning of Silence.' Silence began for Bhagawan, when he enacted the Drama of Death, and entered the House of Death, alive, in the little upstair room at Madurai. May it be so for all of us; for we are truly born only when we enter the House of Death, conscious and aware, and the noise of the self dies into the Silence.

V

Sri Bhagawan Said :—

> " When once the man reaches it, he gets fixed there. Fixed once, fixed ever he will be. Therefore the state which prevailed in the days of the *Pathala Linga* cellar continues uninterrupted, with only this difference that the body remained there inert, but is now active. "

(*Talks*; 1955; Vol. III ɪ p. 738)

Mrs. F. Taleyarkhan as I saw Her

Sri BAIJNATH SINGH

I was fortunate enough to visit Ramana Ashram in the last week of May 1965. When we reached there the evening Puja was on. We also joined it and experienced great ecstasy and unspeakable joy. It is here that we happened to meet Mrs. F. Taleyarkhan. This lady belonging to a high Parsi family has almost completely renounced the world and is now living just close to Ramana Ashram (Tiruvannamalai). She is a disciple of Sri Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi. She was also connected with the management of the Ashram for quite a long time after His death. She is devoted. Anand Mayee-Ma also and when Mataji visited South India in 1952, she took great trouble to make arrangements for Her stay at several places. Mrs. F. Taleyarkhan is very well known through out South India. She remains immersed in God's name to She considers the paths of knowledge, devotion and service to be one. She believes that to bring joy to people by singing the praises of God is the greatest service. We found that she has all the qualities of a saint such as purity of character, great love for God and man-kind, boundless sympathy for His creatures, spiritual knowledge, great calmness and lastly great strength. She has unblemished character, wisdom which comes from spiritual insight, sublime calmness and strength. By the presence of such holy personalities, the whole society is uplifted. Society needs more and more of such figures. Unselfish love which she has in abundance is the need of all human beings.

Mrs. F. Taleyarkhan has also done very useful work of renovating the Pathalalingam shirne situated in the premises of Arunachaleshvara Temple. It is here that Sri Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi spent several days in deep meditation. The shrine was lying in a state of disrepair, but now after renovation, it looks so beautiful that those visiting the temple can not but admire it. Infact it has now become a grand memorial to Sri Bhagavan Ramana's association with it. With the renovation of this shrine were carried out the renovation of the roads leading to the shrine and Tiruvannamalai Railway Station, where Sri Rajagopalachari the then Governor General of India who came specially to open the shrine in May 1949, alighted.. Again now she is making permanent arrangements for the daily worship at the shrine and for this purpose she wants to deposit a sum of Rs. 20,000/- in the bank so that the expenses may be met out of the income from the interest.

We also had the opportunity of meeting this most affectionate and renowned lady at her residence next morning. Her mother who is above 80 years of age and is equally a piouse lady, was also present and blessed us.

Sri Ramana Maharshi: Some Recollections

Major General S. L. BHATIA,
C.I.E., M.C., I.M.S.(Ret.)

I had the good fortune to meet Sri Ramana Maharshi at a very critical moment in my life. It was in December 1948 that my dear wife, Shrimati Rajkishorie, after an illness lasting a little over two months in Madras passed away, and thus our happy companionship came to an end. This terrible event caused more grief than I can express in words. Life became almost unbearable. I was then Surgeon General with the Government of Madras. I had heard of Sri Ramana Maharshi at Tiruvannamalai, and was eager to see him. I went to Tiruvannamalai, a short time after this tragic event, and through the good offices of my esteemed friend, Mrs. F. Taleyarkhan, had the opportunity of meeting Sri Bhagavan. He was in bed then suffering from a serious ailment. It was a malignant growth (Sarcoma) in his right arm, which proved fatal. I saw him along with the physician in the Ashram who was looking after him. The tumour must have been extremely painful. But Sri Bhagavan was wonderfully calm and peaceful. I was really surprised at the cool and indifferent manner in which he bore his physical suffering and pain. I have a very vivid recollection of this. It inspired the highest respect and regard for him. His self-control under those difficult circumstances was really superhuman.

Then, Mrs. F. Taleyarkhan told Sri Bhagavan about the sad demise of my wife, which was the source of so much grief to me. After listening to this, Sri Bhagavan looked at me with profound calmness and mercy, and I felt, that he was bestowing his blessings formy comfort and peace of mind. This was really a wonderful experience. This visit to Sri Bhagavan had a very tranquilizing effect on my mind, and I felt more peaceful afterwards.

I also saw Sri Bhagavan in the hall of the Ashram, where he used to sit along with others. Here again he was perfectly silent, but cast a benevolent and merciful glance alround and blessed all the devotees.

The chief secret of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi is his doctrine of self-enquiry and self-realisation. He says, that the purpose of all the scriptures is enquiry into the Self. It is declared in them, that the annihilation of the ego-sense is Liberation. Worhsip is only self-enquiry: "On divesting the mind of the qualities of darkness and activity by constant meditation, the Bliss of the Self will clearly manifest within the subtle mind."

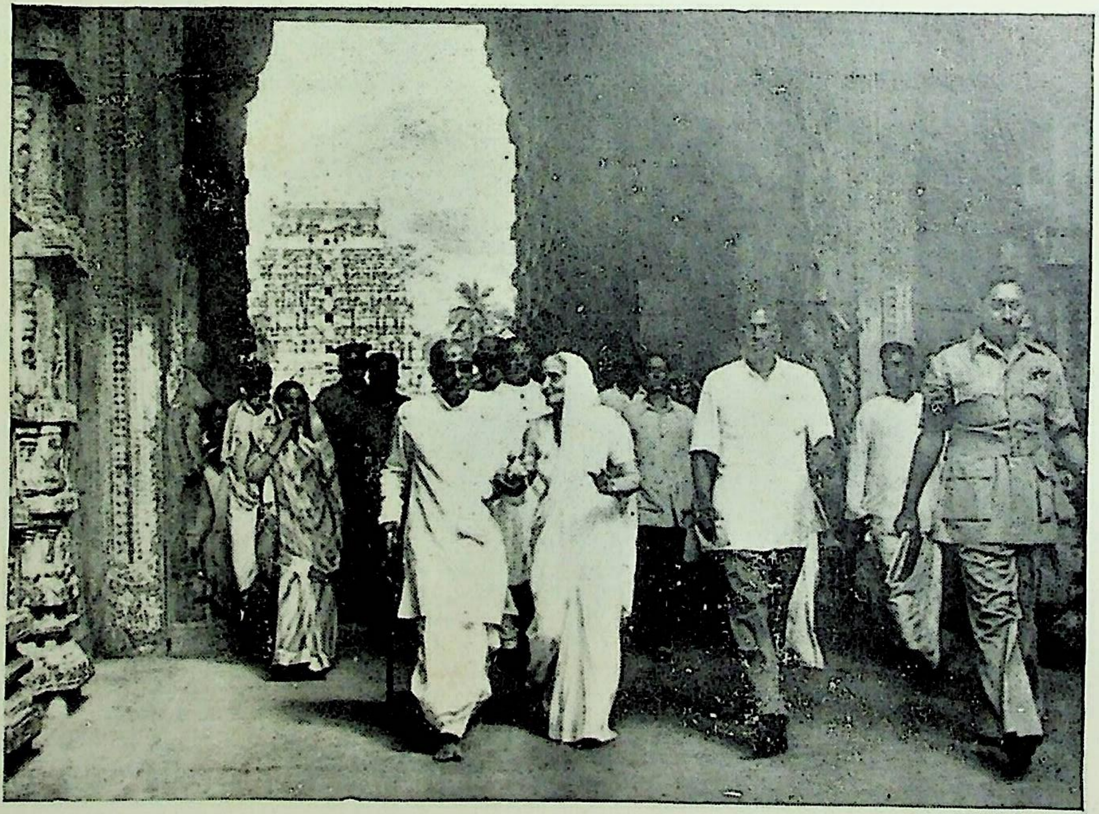
Shri Bhagavan was a great teacher. His teachings are very clear, and need to be carefully studied and scrupulously followed. In his selections from Bhagavad-Gita, he draws special attention to the following:

"Know this finally that the supreme state of Beatitude is attained only by absolute surrender to the Lord who dwells as the Self in the Heart, and by His Grace alone will you obtain peace, the Abode eternal." (Verses 41 & 42.)

Shri Bhagavan in his earlier years sat in Samadhi in an underground vault known as Patala Lingam Shrine in Tiruvannamalai. This shrine has become sacred for the devotees of Shri Bhagavan on account of his close association with it. I am glad, steps are being taken to reconstruct and preserve it in a proper manner.

Finally, let us earnestly pray, that the Grace of Sri Bhagavan, may bless us all, and promote happiness and peace in this troubled world of ours.

Sri Patalalingam Temple Opening Ceremony Thiruvannamalai 1949



Sri. C. Rajagopalachari (then Governor-General of India) arrives at Arunachaleswar Temple for the opening ceremony

How I First Came To Arunachala

LEONARD BOWEN

Every true devotee of Bhagavan sooner or later has the urge to visit the spiritual home of Arunachala, and in January 1964 on my return to Australia en route from England I fulfilled this disire. For some time during my stay in England I had been in correspondence with Swami Rajeswarananda, an old devotee of Bhagavan, and toward the end of 1963 I wrote to the Swami telling him of my intention.

During Jauuary I was still in London, undecided whether to leave at the end of the month or in February. I felt an odd sense of urgency that I should go as soon as possible or I might never go at all! Accordingly I finally reserved an air-passage to Madras to depart from London on the 26th January and to arrive in Madras on the 28th.

The plane left London on Sunday morning and late that Sunday night it had landed at Kwait in Arabia, where all the passengers were supposed to change aircraft to an Air-India plane bound for Bombay. After some delay, it was announced that the passengers could not be taken due to a misunderstanding and we would have to wait till the following day for the next plane. I was very tired but again felt the odd sense of urgency for continuing my journey. I went to see the air-lines official and without really knowing why, insisted that I must continue my journey on the first flight. To my surprise the official suddenly agreed to find a place for me on the Air-India plane and soon I was air borne for Bombay.

From Bombay to Madras I took an Indian Airlines flight on the Tuesday morning. Although there was an early morning bus from Madras to Tiruvannamalai, I realised that I would arrive too late and was resigned to spending the Tuesday night in Madras, little knowing that there was in fact a midday bus to Tiruvannamalai!

As the plane came in to land at Madras airport the end of my air journey, I was wondering what I would do and where I would stay. Although I had travelled in Western countries this was my first visit to the East, and among a strange people who spoke a foreign tongue I felt more than a little lost and lonely. 'Bhagavan,' I said silently as the plane touched down, 'this is your home I'm coming to, please let me know what you want of me.'

After the usual delay with the Customs officials, I tried to make enquiries at the airport about transport to Tiruvannamalai. I found some difficulty in pronouncing the name, and no one really seemed to understand where I wanted to go or how I should get there. I stood there with my suit-case feeling rather bewildered and foolish. Suddenly I noticed an Indian police officer looking curiously at me.

'Can I be of assistance?' he enquired. I again explained hastily that I wished to go to Tiruvannmalai.

'Why do you want to go there?' he asked. Rather surprised, I told him that I was going to Ramanashram, and taking out of my pocket a small photograph of Bhagavan which I always carry, I showed it to him. The effect was electrical! A look of deep reverence immediately came over his handsome face and he made a devotional sign with his hands,

'So,' he said, 'you are going to Ramana Maharshi's ashram.'

'Yes, yes,' I said,' did you know him?

'Of course,' he replied, I had his darshan before he left the body. You can get the midday bus to Tiruvannamalai. Come, I will direct you.'

From there on this kind devotee of Bhagavan took charge of me. We took a taxi into Madras where we talked together over lunch before he put me on the bus to Tiruvannamalai.

It was dusk before the majestic outline of Arunachala could be seen against the sky. No words can really describe my feelings as I saw the silhouette of this stark and desolate hill where Bhagavan spent so many years. In a strange and moving way I felt that I too was coming to my home!

When I reached the Ashram, night had fallen and I was desperately tired and weary after my sleepless nights and journey. I was greeted kindly by Swami Rajeswarananda who was siting in a tricycle chair. I had not known previously that the Swami was unable to walk and it was something of a shock to realise that, he was so incapacitated. He showed me to my room, a small boy called Hara pushing him along. I was then taken to the dining hall for some food. The Swami explained that it was the night of the fullmoon, and that Hara and he with another German visitor were intending to make pradakshina around the hill, the full of the moon being an especially auspicious time·

'Would you like to come?' he asked, 'or are you too tired?'

Although I longed for rest, for some reason I said that I would come, little realising that the journey was a walk of eight or nine miles! We started off, Hara peddling the tricycle with Swami sitting in it. The first part of the journey lay along a tarred road, but this soon gave way to an undulating gravel road whose surface was so loose and rough, that little Hara was unequal to the task. The German visitor and I took turns to peddle and occasionly we would stop at one of the shrines and rest; glorious Indian full-moon shining resplendently above. I soon realised that the journey was much longer that I had anticipated, and a great weariness and drowsiness overcame me as I walked or pushed the Swami along in his chair. By the time we had gone half-way, I realised that it would need a small miracle for me to complete the journey so great was my fatigue! I inwardly blamed myself for my foolishness in ever agreeing to come. Of course I said nothing to the others but noticed the German visitor looking curiously at me as I stumbled along, literally on the point of falling asleep as I walked. The last mile through the town was sheer torture but somehow I made it to the Ashram where I collapsed on my bed!

The next two days passed swiftly while I conversed with the Swami on spiritual matters, little realising that his hours were numbered. On the third night after my arrival I was awakened at mid-night by the agonised voice of Hara.

'Come quickly, come quickly to Swami!'

'What is it Hara?' I exclaimed, rising from my bed half asleep.

'Quickly, quickly,' he cried and I realised that something serious had occurred. Hastily I put on a few clothes and ran along to Swami's room which was very near my own. As I entered, Hugo Maier, an Ashram devotee, was taking the pulse of Swami Rajeswaranda who was lying back in a chair with his eyes closed. One glance convinced me that Swami had left this mortal existence and although Hugo administered an injection this proved to be true! A half-signed cheque lay on a table where the Swami had been working when the attack had suddenly occurred. Soon other devotees awoke and came to the room, everyone being profoundly shocked by the suddeness of the Swami's passing.

Swami Rajeswarananda was buried the next day at the foot of Arunachala. As I watched the funeral rites, the events of the past few days seemed like a dream. I recalled the moonlight journey around the Hill and realised that but for my arrival at Tiruvannamalai on that day, it would have not been possible for me to have helped the Swami to make his last pradakshina. In some strange way it seemed prophetic that my first night at Arunachala was to be my first pradakshina and to be Swami's last! With great emotion I also realised that I had been used as an instrument for this event and inwardly thanked Bhagavan that my first coming to Arunachala had served such a purpose.

'Ramana'—the Self

PETER BRIGHT

In the quiet evening hour,
While reading a book, He came,
And swiftly, surely thrust
His dart, dripping with nectar'd love, deep within —
My empty heart.

No physical pain from such a wound.
Yet from the opened inner core, there flowed
A gush of pent-up tears, with cause unknown.
Till long the silent tears streamed forth, from —
My crying heart.

Ne'er before was a Master's touch
Revesled to my restless, seeing soul,
Then, with pity, my real Lord came
And awoke to life a dormant seed in —
My longing heart.

New forces wrecked old ways of life,
New sufferings came to change my course
To tread the inner path, before untried,
And when old habits block the way, He guides —
My wayward heart.

The climb is steep and fraught with ego's guile
To deal with this two tracks He laid,
Which give a choice of each, or both, then later meet
To take His pilgrim home. There He waits, to clasp —
My loving heart.

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"Light Pedestal"

RAFAEL LOYADA CARMONA

"*Patala Lingam*": Transliterating a little into the Spanish language, I can use the denomination "Light Pedestal". In Spanish, "pata" is a synonym of foot, of pedestal; the basis upon which something stands. This something happens to be nothing less than a beginning of clearness; a germ of light; a primogenial opening to spiritual life.

Every important temple is in itself "Patala Lingam", a Light Pedestal. For this reason, ancient wise men caused initiative monuments to be erected: temples, palaces, statues, pyramids, so that within any man who looked at them or walked around them for no practical purpose, certain nervous processes would be intensified, still unknown to neurophysiology of this age, and would gradually awaken him to that which is Real, as the sleeper who is softly aroused by the name used by his mother to call him as a child.

During most intense moments of wakefulness, which common people call trance, man would discover and learn the lesson contained in architectural lines, in the distribution of masses, in the order of even numbers, in the proportion of measurements.

It did not escape the farsightedness of ancient wise men that such monuments, although designed to last thousands of years, could be destroyed by the pugnacity and wild violence of childish mankind, still ruled by the sub-human currents of the planet, and that, in their folly, generations being proud of their technical progress would scorn them. They knew, indeed, that some future architects would be inspired to design, consciously or unconsciously, initiative monuments that would produce in the disinterested observer that contemplative eutaraxia known as aesthetic emotion, leading them to the state of mind of one who tries to recognise a childhood friend in a face abused by years.

Ancient wisemen taught men the architectural principles. They thus planted not only the seed of all architecture, but also of all possible knowledge of things and of the whole.

The repertoire now available to mankind in temples of Asia, temples of Pre-Columbian America, European Cathedrals, etc., contains, for one who can see and understand it, all sciences in their perfect and finished form, both monotheistic and ideographical. By looking at architectural works one may gain full knowledge of astronomy, mathematics, cybernetics, analytics, biology, mineralogy, history, psychology, chemistry, and linguistics. There is no branch of knowledge that is not included in the existing architectural repertoire. It also comprises all techniques, all means of transforming society and nature. Through the conscious interpretation of architectural pieces, it is possible to make all of those changes desired by men.

Unfortunately, nowadays the architects are veiled prophets who do not even understand their own works, and who do not know the basic and only key to make adequate use of what they produce. But their love for art, that strange rapture that is simply a prelude, an anticipation, an imminent understanding, makes them cultivate composition, interpretation, and appreciation; and they thus preserve and transmit a sacred patrimony to be possessed by men when they become worthy.

Reminiscenses

S. S. COHEN

I retrospect through the haze of the years to that memorable day of May 14, 1949. It was a clear day and cool morning. May is the month of sunshine and high refreshing breeze in the morning before the sun climbs to the zenith to scorch the earth with its rays. It was very early morning on that day that the saloon which brought the Governor-General of India drew up at the railway station of Tiruvannamali. The town had been all agog for a whole week to receive fittingly the first and last Governor-General that had ever set on its soil. The reception was brilliant, the smiles on the faces of the people were broad and happy (except those of the Police Officers who were responsible for the security of the distinguished visitors), the streets were cleanly swept and decked with welcoming arches and bunting, the visitors—ministers, journalists, high officials, V.I.Ps. from all over the State of Madras,—flocked to the reception place in the big Arunachaleswara temple and filled all the places.

The occasion was the opening of the shrine built over the now celebrated Pathala Lingam, which became associated with the name of Sri Ramana Maharshi as the first of the series of places, where he lived for some months in 1896, in silent solitude to enjoy by himself the bliss of the Divine Realisation which flooded him while he was still in his adolescent age. The description of the Pathala Lingam and of the incidents in the life of Ramana during his stay in it has been told over and over again, and needs no repetition from me. I am here only to narrate the events of that day, of which I was an eye-witness.

It was just 8 A.M. when His Excellency entered by the eastern gate of the temple. The whole vast audience rose and immediately a melodious prayer was heard to rise from tke dais, sung by a number of girls. Then the hostess Mrs. F. Taleyarkhan in her flowing immaculate sari and graceful manners, introduced to H. E., Sri. J. N. Tarapore, the donor and architect of the new temple, his family and all the helpers. On the dais she delivered her welcoming speech in her well-trained and well-modulated voice and impeccable English accent. His Excellency replied in Tamil, his mother tongue, of which, I understand, he is a master.

It was now time to perform the opening ceremony. As His Excellency stepped down to pass on to the shrine to be opened, he saw the tall, dignified figure of Swami Niranjanananda, the Sarvadhikari of Sri

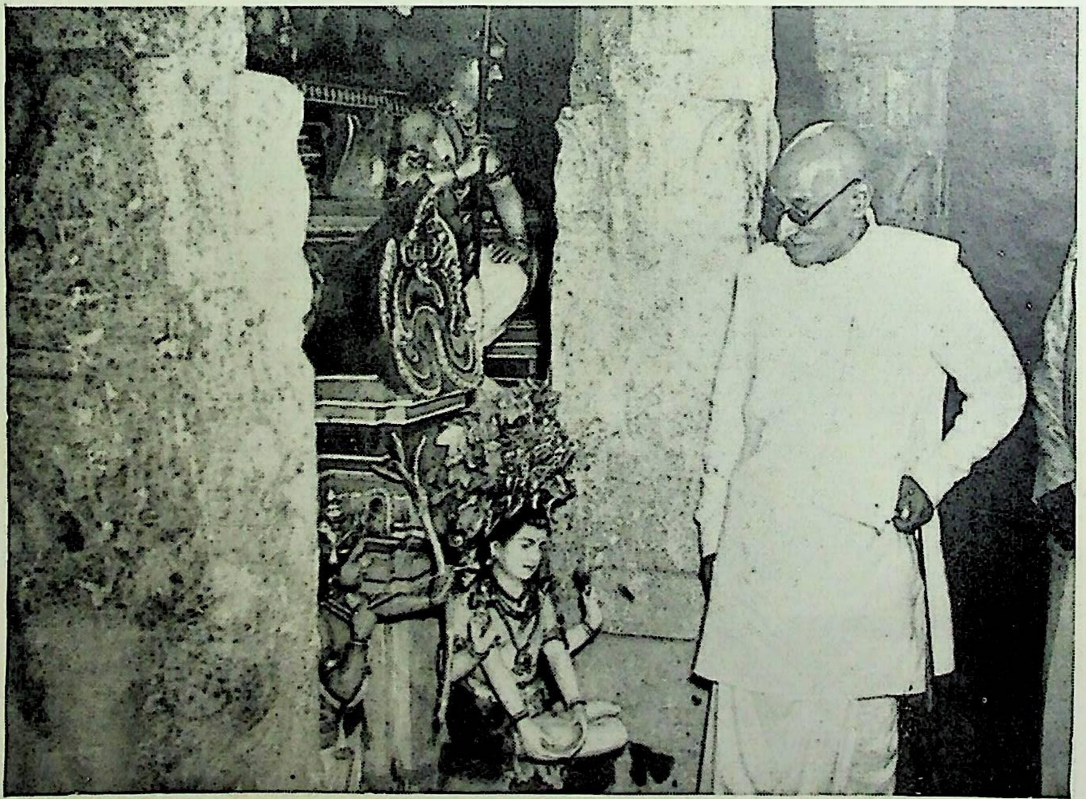
Ramanashram, and was very touched by his solemn look and ochre garb. So he folded his hands and bowed low to the Swami.

The opening ceremony over, the authorities of the big temple, in which the Pathala Lingam occupied a small corner, approached the Governor-General and with the Brahmin priests did him "temple honour" with the burning of camphor, breaking of coconut, and offering of fruits and flowers as the gift (*prasadam*) from the Deity of the temple.

While His Excellency rested in his saloon in the railway station, the Governor of Madras, His Highness the Maharaja of Bhavnagar, accompanied by his wife, proceeded to Ramanashram to have the *darshan* of the Master. They sat on chairs at the foot of the Maharshi's couch facing him. His Highness said in English that it had long been his and his wife's longing to pay him their homage and sit on the floor, like the other devotees, rather than on chairs like then. The Maharshi remained silently gazing in space till they left after a little while to look round the Ashram and worship in its temple.

At noon the whole party returned to Madras after lunching in the station.

The Pathala Lingam is now immortalised. The time has come to make it to enternity a place of worship by performing the final consecration of Kumbhabhishekam, to give solace to the millions who, throughout the ages, will pay homage to the memory of one of the greatest spiritual teachers that the world has produced namely, Sri Ramana Maharshi, the blessed saint of the Hill of the Holy Beacon.



Sri. C. Rajagopalachari at the shrine.

Sri Ramana Maharshi

Sri A. DEVARAJA MUDALIAR
Sri Ramanasramam

I am invited to write a small article on Bhagavan for inclusion in the Souvenir Volume to be published shortly in connection with the " Kumbhabhishekam " which is being arranged to be performed in a few months, of the shrine of Pathala Lingam, inside the big Temple of Sri Arunachalesvara in Tiruvannamalai. I should be in a very wretched state indeed, if I find it necessary to decline such a kind invitiation, especially when the invitation comes from one who has often been good enough to say to all her friends that I have been her one great and good friend consistently throughout the 25 years she and I have lived at our dear Bhagavan's feet - Mrs. F. Taleyarkhan.

Now, what is there fresh for me to write about Bhagavan.I must only repeat what so many who are more learned and more capable than I in every say to speak with authority, have proclaimed in no uncertain language.

Contemporary saints in our land, savants both in the East and the West, steeped in spiritual and mystic lore, sadhaks practising various methods of self-realisation, have all proclained that Sri Ramana Maharshi was a Jnani, a realised soul. I shall only say here what that means. According to Advaita and what I mysely heard more than once from the lips of our Bhagavan, a Jnani is no different from the Self or Brahman. He who knows Brahman becomes Brahman. Anyhow, it is in this way that I and several others, sitting at His feet, regarded Him and worshipped Him. Because of our long stay with Him we have been enabled to observe in Him all those qualities which the sacred books describe as the qualities of a Jivanmukta, a Jnani, a Sthitaprajna, or a Gunatita. The entire world is greatly benefited by the mere existence therein of an exalted personage like Maharshi. He need not do anything to help the world. His mere existence is of great benefit to all people of the world. Bhagavan used to quote a Tamil stanza which says that not only disciples and admirers of a Jnani, but even those who are indifferent to Him or even actually opposed to Him, are all benefited by a Jnani's existence. When that is recognised, the importance of Tiruvannamalai in which he lived and moved for more than 50 years, and the several places in which he lived for longer or shorter periods, becomes apparent. Every place sanctified by His living becomes an object of adoration and worship to one devotee or another. It is no surprise, therefore, that to Mrs. Taleyarkhan came an impulse to regard as specially important the shrine of Pathala Lingam, where for a short period Bhagavan lived in utter seclusion, unconscious of his body and merged in the Self during the earliest days of His stay at Tiruvannamali.

Each devotee chooses his or her own favourite place for special worship and all the rest can heartily join in such worship, if they feel inclined to do so and I am sure that will help them. Personally I feel there must be some divine plan which has been urging Mrs. Taleyarkhan to take a special interest in the Pathala Lingam Shrine. For otherwise how could one solitary frail woman have achieved such a remarkable success in renovating and reconstructing this old and neglected shrine. I sincerely wish all success to the Kumbhabhishekam for this shrine which she proposes to celerate in a few months.

As I rarely write an article on Bhagavan without mentioning some reminiscences or other about Him, I shall mention here an incident sweet to my recollection, in which our Bhagavan made use of Mrs. Taleyarkhan to send me a guidance which He thought I needed.

I must take my readers back now to that fateful day in April 1950 when the great blow, though not unexpectedly, but nevertheless very grievously, came down on the devoted heads of so many devotees of Bhagavan and removed His body from our midst. He passed away at 8-47 p.m. on the 14th April, 1950. Almost immediately after, we removed his body from the small room in the east, which He was occupying for about four months before his Samadhi, to the New Hall, and there we all gathered in grief unspeakable, and some of us wept and some joined in the Bhajan, in the hope and belief that it would be most acceptable to Bhagavan.

His body was there till about 6 p.m. the next day and was interred in the grave prepared for it about 6-30 p.m. Devotees like me had thus nearly twenty-four hours during which they had ample opportunity to see the body. By 6 p.m. huge crowds from far and near flocked to the Asramam to have a last look at their great and unequalled Master. I somehow felt that the proper thing for me would be not to compete with these crowds in their anxious efforts to get a last look at the body of Bhagavan, before it was interred. Accordingly I stood at a little distance on the narrow verandah in front of our bookstall. While I was there an old friend of nine and a fellow devotee, Mr. C. Somasundaram Pillai, came to me there, having just then seen Bhagavan's body in the pit and having thrown 'Vilva' and 'Vibhuthi' on it. He told me that it is very rarely that one could hope to get a chance of being present at the interrment of real Jnani and we should consider ourselves blessed to have had such a chance. His idea evidently was that I should go near Bhagavan's body that time and throw in it Vilva and Vibhuthi, as he and several others had done. In my pride of learning and usual heterodox way of thinking, I simply thought that he was merely following as it was usual with him, his orthodox and superstitious ways.

In a short while Mrs. Taleyarkhan came to me and said "I must also go near Bhagavan's body and throw Vilva and Vibhuthi as all others are doing. But it is impossible for me to go near Bhagavan. So please get hold of some policeman or other who can safely escort me there." I accordingly caught hold of a policeman and brought him to her and told her "This man will take you there all right". She, however, said "No, No, you too must come with me", and drew me by my arm. I accordingly went with her and dropped Vilva and Vibhuthi on my dear Bhagavan's body. From that moment I am fully convinced that in spite of reason, in "erring reason's spite", there is obviously great benefit to be derived in being present and taking part in the last rituals attendent on the Mahasamadhi of a Jnani or realised soul, and that Bhagavan, in His infinite mercy, wanted that I should get the benefit of such participation, in spite of my crass stupidity and unreasoning aversion to all orthodox traditional observances.

It is not at all necessary that all or some or even one of my readers should share in this belief of mine. But Bhagavan has indelibly impressed upon my mind by the foregoing incident, and some other incidents which would take too long to detail here, that so far at least as I am concerned the maximum benefit I could achieve by worshipping Bhagavan could be attained by my worshipping Bhagavan not at several other places within the Asramam, such as the small room which He occupied in His last illness, the new Hall, completed only a few months before Bhagavan's passing away, and the old Hall, where He remained for nearly a quarter of a century and which had for most of us many happy recollections, but only at his Samadhi.

I remember having read in some article written by Mr. Chadwick (Sadhu Arunachala), that according to Hindu Scriptures out of the Sixteen Kalas composing the saint's body one Kala remains with the body. Whatever that may mean and whether that is right or wrong, it is well known that the resting place of the departed Jnanis are respected throughout the world as places full of spiritual power and grace, power and grace which can be drawn upon by all those who go there in faith and devotion for whatever help they may need.

In conclusion I should say that overiding all that I have stated above, it must always be borne in mind that when a sincere soul fully convinced that a Jnani like our Bhagavan was not really His body but only the Spirit and was therefore above time and space, and meditates upon and worships Bhagavan as the Brahman, omnipresent and all gracious, can never fail to achieve beneficent spiritual help in deliverance.

Facing the Sage

MOUNI SADHU

About sixteen years have passed since the departure of the Maharshi, the Sage of Arunachala, at whose feet I spent several months in the Spring and Summer of 1949. Enough time has now elapsed to permit us a certain desirable perspective of the luminous appearence of Maharshi on the spiritual horizon of our small planet.

Thousands of people streamed past the Sage's modest couch, on which he spent the last months of his earthly life. I keenly observed the crowds of visitors, trying to evaluate the influence of the Master on all those erring souls, among whom there must also have been a few genuine spiritual seekers, some of whom had come from the other ends of the world.

It is a well-known fact, that in the Maharshi's presence everyone felt himself to be different and better than before in his everyday life. The spiritual magnetism of the One who himself had found the fina peace and wisdom could not fail to radiate on all of us, just as the sun sheds its rays on everything and everyone, good and bad alike. That is beyond any doubt, but what happened later? How many were able to retain their unique experience and to incorporate it into the patterns of their lives after they left the Darshan?

Years later, after I had returned from India, an Indian friend, himself a sincere and active devotee of the Maharshi, who will certainly read these lines, once wrote to me, saying that he believed that the number of true disciples of the Master could be counted on the figures of one hand. Now, looking back, how true these words from the past appear to be.

Acceptance of the Guru's teachings *means to work along his lines in the world.* One simply feels obliged by the mute, but inexorable inner law, to try "to repay" the blessing and grace which was once received, in spite of one's imperfections and weaknesses. How can a man undertake such a work? I believe that this is possible only by following the Master's example, that is, by making his words of Truth available and clear to all those who still have the eyes to see and the ears to hear.

Such a decision (even if there was any mental one of that kind in a man) comes spontaneously and without any forethought. One simply KNOWS what to do and does not worry about the means, for they invariably follow, sometimes in a quite unexpected and unforeseen form.

During the whole of my stay with the Maharshi, I meticulously kept my diary, which I later transformed into my first book "In Days of Great Peace". I did not know what would be the reaction of the world to that first attempt to let ripe souls know about the message of the Great Rishi for modern humanity. But it worked, and the joy of seeing the understanding of spiritual seekers spread throughout the world, was not denied me. Earlier, I had been rather pessimistic about such a possibility, as I knew, because of my own long search of more than twenty-five years, just how hard it is and how much toil and time must be sacrificed for it. And yet, my "out-stretched hand" was accepted by the few, who did not forget the Message from the Hill of Arunachala.

But what of the thousands, who had received the Grace of seeing the Sage with their own eyes? How many had forgotton the atmosphere so vibrant with peace and wisdom, which surrounded the departing Master?

I sat at his feet from morning till evening and one of the initial results, that were noticed after the first few days, was the realization of one's erroneous paths in the past, devoted to man's worst enemy-his Ego, that "hybrid arising between the body and the Self" (Maharshi's own words). When I realized the greatness of of Maharshi's achievement, I involuntarily turned to myself and said: "Here sits the Sage without boasting of any titles, or degrees, like the sun in comparison to my poor little candle." And then the first battle was won. I realized the emptiness of all human titles and "degrees", when the One, like Maharshi, had none of them. From that day forward I held in contempt any such "additions" to my own and the names of others. One, who can see even the smallest fragment of Light, cannot call himself by any bombastic titles, as we may readily see around us, and by which men often try "to magnify" their poor personalities, their egos, which rule them relentlessly. When I notice that someone has added something like "Saint", "Initiate", "Master" (some even 'Maharshi"!), "King of Yogis", "Sage", and so on, to his name, I KNOW that he is trying to substitute by words, the essence which is lacking in him. Such people have forgotten for all time, the Message of Maharshi.

It is a well-known fact, that Maharshi himself declared that "properly speaking he had no name at all", and besides, after reaching the hill of Arunachala, he never put his signature to anything for the remainder of his life.

Another transformation was the removal of all anxiety, which often devours many otherwise able souls, who have not experienced the PEACE found at the Master's feet. How many people are worried about "the fate of the world", when, at the same time, they have not resolved their own problems? "As you are, so is the world", said the Sage. Hence the world can be improved only by ones own improvement. If all work do so world would soon become perfect. In another place the Maharshi said that "itis the Creator's duty to look after his world, but not ours!"

Howmany hypocrisies would be annihilated, if men only realized these two simple axioms!

The next myth to be overthrown in the presence of the Maharshi was that of conditions and places. In following Bhagavan's teachings, I ceased to ascribe any meaning to the material environment, for, as he taught us, tbe attainment is as possible in a noisy London flat, as in a secluded ashram. And yet, so many people still worry because they are unable to under take a long and costly journey to a "holy place", in which they hope to achieve what they cannot otherwise!

Once, when a Madras teacher saw the Maharshi, he decided to abandon his family and job and remain forever with the Master in his "jungle ashram", as the place was often called then. But Maharshi was not at all enthusiastic about such a decision. He simply pointed out, that changing a men's title from "teacher" to that of "sanyasin" is only a useless "change of labels", under which there still remains the same old, restless and unconquered mind.

A few misguided people, who spent some time with the Sage, but who were unable to realize his teachings, like to speak about the so-called "philosophy" of the Master.

But even a look at Maharshi's own writings, or recorded answers to his questioners, clearly shows that he was beyond that which is usually called "philosophy". What he really brought into this world for us were his teachings, his exact instructions, as to what we should and should not do, in order to follow his Path of Realization of the true Self in man. And he never lowered himself to any "philosophical", or other discussions, merely stating the pure Truth as he knew It. So these alleged "philosophies", as just mentioned, belong to their authors, and not to the Master at all.

The conception of life itself also undergoes a radical change. Some religions teach their faithful, that this life in matter is only a temporary sojourn, while the "true life" will come only later, in eternity, after the death of the body. For many, this simplification still works. But in the presence of the Sage, Life takes on a different meaning and a wider sense. One realizes, that Eternity is *now and here*, and our three sub-divisions of time (past, present and future) are only an artificial illusion of the conditioned existence, in ignorance. Therefore, a few realized souls use the term "THE ETERNAL PRESENT".

Finally, another very "popular" scourge, inflicted by the unconquered mind, was also removed by the Light of the Sage. Men often run endlessly after "new books and teachings", as if in the multitude of words, there could be found anything eternal and as if Realization is dependent upon the thousands of books swallowed during one's lifetime. In the overwhelming majority, books are merely the crystallized streams of thoughts of their authors, that is, the products of their minds.

One has quite enough difficulty in conquering (that is, in *stilling*, as the Maharshi used to say) one's own mind, without drowning in the thinking processes of others. This, of course, relates only to books full of theories and guesses. Works depicting and expounding real spiritual experiences, and showing the ways to reach such results, are rather manuals and therefore useful and sometimes simply indispensable.

This attitude also leads to the realization of the futility of all sectarianism, or the belief that there are certain sects, which can ensure success for a seeker. One should rather look at WHO is speaking, or acting through such organizations: is he a master, or only a figure-head at the top? The test is very simple and easy for everyone, who is not devoid of common sense. Consequently, I am always on the lookout for the manifestation of egoism, of that "arch-enemy-ego", of ordinary human weakness under the bombastic titles and slogans. If I find, I know where I am.

In modern pseudo-philosophical and occult literature we often find an obvious shunning of the idea of the Supreme Being, as the final aim of every spiritual achievement. But Maharshi, was deeply merged in the conception of such a Being, and the majority of his original writings are premeated with elevating devotion, a fact, about which far too many "interpreters" are intentionally silent, trying to hide it under various types of misinterpretation. One should be wise enongh in order to see just *who they are really serving*.

These few comments are obviously a mere fragment of what one could really bring from the Maharshi's initiation. But they are like seeds, from which plants grow, if the soil is well prepared for them.

Sri. C. Rajagopalachari, The Maharaja of Bhavanagar (then Governor of Madras), Mrs. F. Taleyarkhan at the shrine entrance.

My Visit to Ramanasramam

T. ELASSER
Germany

Ever since I heard about Ramana Maharshi for the first time, I have been deeply moved and strongly attracted by his teachings. Much of what previously engaged my attention receded into the background making way to an ever increasing desire to penetrate further into the knowledge of the truths.

On my way to certainty I met people with whom I shared a common aim, books that gave me guidance and support, and on the occasion of a visit to India, I had the opportunity of realising a wish very dear to me, a stay at the ashram of Tiruvannamalai.

This stay was the experience which opened my heart to a new world. I shall forever remember with gratitude that I was allowed to partake in the peace and stillness of this unique place. It is a great comfort to know that there is such a place radiant with a spiritual light.

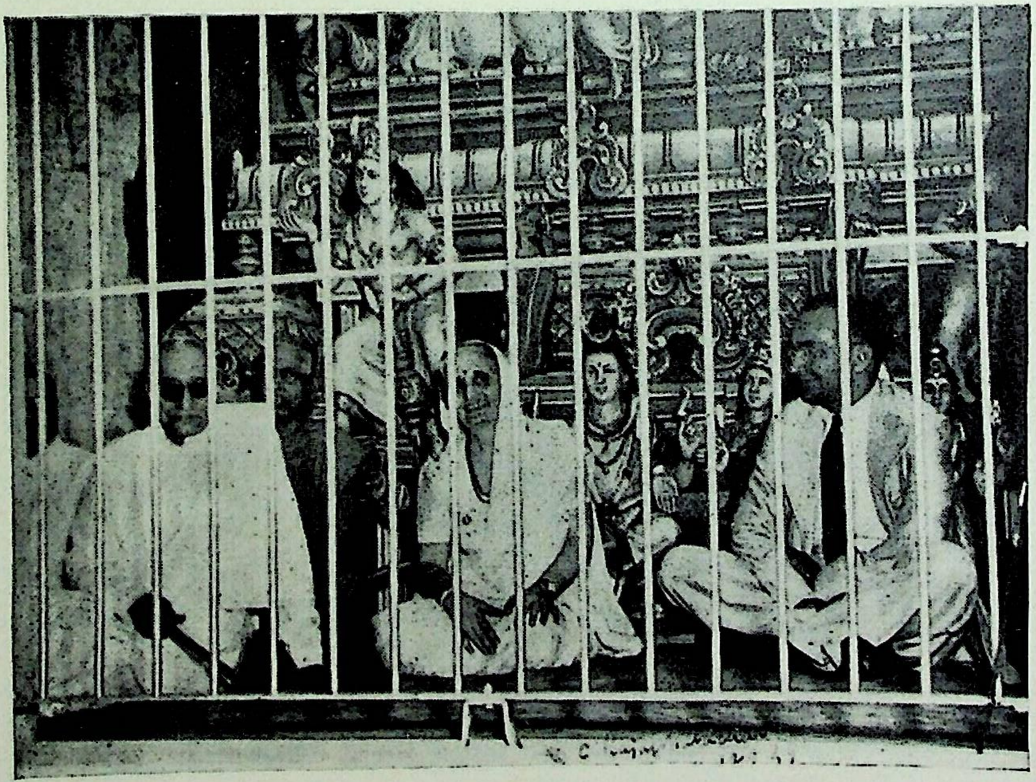
Yet the most profound recognition imparted tome has probably been that the grace of the guru is not something to be experienced only at the holy place, but has to became alive within our own hearts, in a way the ashram is within us and where ever we are, we are able to bring into being, according to our capability, the state of our self-realisation. This basic principle which so decisively helped to determine my future way is what I took with me from Tiruvannamalai and for which I shall be grateful forever.

The Peace of the Lord

GLADYS DE MEUTER

I as pilgrim, stood on Life's Highway—
Afraid, bewildered by Maya's play.
Caught in the storm of sorrow and tears,
Laughing when joy's gay rainbow appears.
Hurled to the earth by sickness and pain,
Whirled high aloft by pleasure again.
Until one day my heart uttered 'why?'
And waited breathlessly for reply.
Yet long it seemed that my tears did fall
Before I was ready for the Call—
The yearning for Grace increased until
The ego bowed to the Divine Will.

Softly as dawn illumines the sky,
Guru appeared as wondrous 'I-I'.
Because sense-bound we must touch and see,
Guru appeared in the flesh to free
Sincere hearts from the dream-ego's spell,
Bursting as under illusion's shell.
'Surrender and be still,' the Voice said,
'To the Haven of Self in peace be led.
Turn inwards, enquire within and know
The true Bliss which I AM does bestow.'
In the Silence Guru sings His Song.
O Heart Divine, to Thee I belong ... ...



Sri. C. Rajagopalachari, Mrs. F. Taleyarkhan and Mr. Tarapore at the shrine.

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In the midst of Shri Ramanashram and its sweet surroundings

SHRI GODAVARI MATAJI
Shri Upasani Kanya Kumaristhan,
Sakuri, Ahmadnagar

Shri Sati Godavari Mataji with a party of about 20 persons was on a pilgrimage tour in November 1964 in Southern India. After visiting Tirupati, Rameswaram, Madurai and Kanya Kumari, we arrived at Cochin. It was there that we finally decided to go to the famous Ashram of Shri Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi at Tiruvannamalai. Accordingly, the Editor of "The Call Divine", a Magazine, which is being published by Ramanashram, was informed. We had been already in correspondence with the Editor, in connection with articles published in the said Magazine regarding Upasani Maharaj and his teachings. The Editor, therefore, communicated to Mrs. Taleyarkhan, about the proposed visit of Shri Sati Godavari Mataji. Mrs. Taleyarkhan is an old devoted lady, closely associated with Ramanashram. She has implicit faith in and deep love and devotion towards "Bhagavan", which is clearly visible in her daily life. Her heart, mind and thoughts are full of Bhagavan's teachings, so much so, that "Bhagavan" has become the sole aim, and goal of her life. Some years ago, she happened to come in contact with a Kanya of Sakuri Ashram during her journey and for the first time, Mrs. Taleyarkhan heard about Sakuri, Shri Upasani Maharaj and Sati Godavari Mataji from her. Since then, she was eager to have Shri Mataji's holy darshan. Consequently, when she heard about Sati Godavari Mataji's proposed visit, her mind was over-whelmed with joy, so much so, that for the time being, she was at a loss to decide how best she should receive Shri Mataji and what arrangements she should make for her.

It was the month of November. Shri Mataji and the party started by bus for Ramanashramam. Our mind had become sober and cheerful with thoughts that we would shortly have a rare and golden opportunity of seeing Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi's world-famous and holy spiritual Ashram and of meditating in His Meditation Hall, connected with so many divine acts and noble feelings about "Maharshi". Those, who had read Bhagavan's wonderful biography, and his high spiritual teachings, recollected several incidents and reminiscences and talked about them. Once upon a time, Ramanashram was a powerful centre of attraction for innumerable devotees. It was in this Ashram that several intelligent Pundits and men of erudition, admitting their spiritual poverty, gained true knowledge of the Self. It was in this Ashram that many Truth-seekers had their doubts cleared and difficulties solved. It was in this Ashram that foreigners had come and stayed with the object of obtaining self-realisation. It was in this Ashram that many loving devotees have found their beloved "Bhagavan", so dear and near to their heart. Thus the Ashram is connected with so many sweet reminiscences and noble environments.

It was the time of sunset. The Nature and its surroundings appeared so beautiful in its twilight. Long, clean and wide roads, lined with lofty shady trees on both sides, picturesque colourful sky, and re-collections about "Bhagavan" filled our mind with satvic joy and made us eager to have Bhagavan's holy darshan, when all of a sudden, Shri Mataji and the rest of us arrived at the main Entrance Gate of Ramanashram, and all of us shouted with a loud voice, "Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi Ki Jai".

Mrs. Taleyarkhan heartily and affectionately received Shri Mataji and the party, and the Ashramites gave her full co-operation in doing so. It was a wonderful instance of how "Bhagavan" used to fulfil his devotee's desires without letting them know about it. Shri Mataji was practically overpowered by the love and affection of the Ashramites. Bhagavan's physical body was then no more visible to the human eye; but it has now assumed the form of the Divine Ashram, and Bhagavan's presence and existence were manifested and experienced in its noble form. It was filled with peace and divine tranquility. and even now the ashram is a source of inspiration and solace to sincere and faithful devotees. Daily Puja-Worship, Bhajan, chanting and recitation of Vedas are still going on as before, in the Ashram even after Bhagavan's Mahasamadhi.

On entering the Ashram, we found first the temple of Bhagavan's Mother, known by the name of the Matushri Mandir. It was a unique example of "Matribhakti" -love and respect towards one's mother. After taking Mother's darshan, we went into the famous Meditation Hall. There we sang bhajan for some time. From there we proceeded to the Dining Hall to take our meals. We had our own meals with great pleasure. Workers, over there, appeared devoted and hardworking and were ever ready to give prompt service to the visitors. Due to their long association with "Bhagavan". 'plain living and high thinking' had become the main principle of their life. Shri Mataji's presence reminded them about "Bhagavan" and they behaved towards her with the same respect and devotion, as they used to have towards "Bhagavan".

Lodging arrangement for Shri Mataji and the accompanying female devotees was made in the residential quarters of the Maharaja Morvi over there. Next morning we were awakened by the shrieking noise of the peacocks. After taking our bath, we went round Arunachala Hill in the car. "Bhagavan" used to look upon and worship that Hill as a holy Lingam of Shri Shiva Shankar. So many reminiscences about "Bhagavan" ralating to that place were told to us. Thereafter we went to the temple of Aruneshvara Mahadev, where we got Puja, abhishekam and arati performed and after darshan we returned to the Ashram. Even though our stay of two days only in the Ashram was very short, Shri Mataji and the devotees got ample satisfaction, peace, they desired. This visit to Ramanashram will ever remain vivid and memorable in our hearts. Affectionate and loving character of Mrs. Taleyarkhan, beautiful natural environments of the place, holy presence of Aruneshvar, and most important of all the silent, meditative calm, blissful and "Brahmasvarrpa" presence of "Bhagavan" have made Ramanashram true to its name, in letter and spirit.

Our thousand salutations to that Ramanashram, where "Bhagavan" had attained and merged himself in "Brahmananda" and where "Bhagavan" is still guiding in the form of his noble Ashram, those sincere and faithful devotees, who visit the Ashram, in getting self-realisation and attaining Brahmananda.

Sleep or Yoga ?

KRISHNA BHIKSHU

In the Ashram. they used to prepare rather pungent food in those old days. And, in the hot breezes radiating from and blowing the hill we were naturally inclined to take a nap after the midday meal. But before doing so, we would retire to the room of Sri Rama Yogi, who would give us crystals of sugar, to relieve the painful sensation in the tongue. And than in a cottage behind the room, two or three of us would go to the land of slumber. We claimed it jocularly that we were going into " jada samadhi !".

Some days later I was surpirsed to find in a beautiful sloka addressed to Shiva, beginning with 'Atma tvam' and ending with a beautiful line 'yat yat karma karomi tat tat akhilam sambho tavaradhanam' a small phrase' *nidra samadhi sthithih* which equates sleep with samadhi and I was also pleased to find that Bhagavan, before he became one, was addicted to the deepest slumbers. It is said that his playmates would take him in that state to the river, beat him well and bring him back and put him on his bed, all without his knowedge, and he still slumbering on. They dare not do it, if he were in the least wakeful. I came across another instance of a wonderful sleep in the Bhagavata, the sleep of Muchikunda, which lasted for ages.

He was the son of Ikshvaku; the gods requested his help to repel the attacks of rakshasas. He spent a long time in doing that task, guarding the angels in svarga, and when Kumara was born, and became the leader of the gods, it is said that Muchikunda's task was performed, quite to their satisfaction, and they asked him to choose of them some boons. They however put two conditions. He shouldn't ask of them liberation, for it was beyond their capacity to give and he should note that in choosing, that all his brood on earth, his wife, sons, their sons and children and friends, were all dead and gone a long time since and different kings of different lines were then ruling over parts of his kingdom ; and therefore Muchikunda did not have a happy choice. What is the use of a kingdom, if its fruits were not to be shared and enjoyed with kith and kin, and what joy would it hold out for him on earth, to live singly and by himself, even if it were for hundreds of year. He thought a while and requested the lords 'I would rather forget the life that I had on earth, and how would it be better to choose some more lives on earth. It were but a repetition of the life that I had, and there again to bury myself ever in misery. I will seek liberation but you say, to give liberation is beyond your power. Therefore, there is only one go for me. Please give me deep sleep, the end of which, should be to find the way to liberation, and to lead no more the normal course of life in the midst of people." The deities granted him the same.

Muchikunda betook himself to a mountain cave, where he laid himself to slumber. Meantime, on earth yugas passed, and it was the twentyeighth mahayuga, in the Manvantara of Vaivasvata, the Seventh Manu, and the Lord had descended on the earth, with the name of Krishna, and was residing in Mathura. Jarasandha, the king of Magadha, whose son-in-law Kamsa, Krishna had killed, even though he had been his own maternal uncle, vowed to take vengeance on the divine avatara. He had invaded Mathura many times and got defeated. But at the time of the last of his invasions, he had an unexpected aid, Kalayavana or the dark Grecian, from the south, with an army of thirty millions› marched against Mathura and it synchronised with Jarasandha's last invasion. Krishna decided that discretion would be the better part of valour. The yadus by themselves could not hope to survive, if by themselves they came into conflict with the forces of Jarasandha and Kalayavana at the same time. He decided to reside in Dwaraka, a place far off from Mathura, on the northern tip of the Sourashtra Peninsula. He shifted all his people to that place secretlv, and apparently the town was being prepared as if to resist an onslaught but when Kalayavana invested it, he found that only two people were issuing forth from Mathura, one dark and one white, both without any kind of weapon and who seemed intent on running away from him. Kalayavana suspected that the black one should be Krishna and gave chase to him on foot. They ran miles and miles, the dark Krishna seeming to struggle hard to escape the clutches of the black Yavana.

They entered a deep ravine and Krishna apparently disappeared into a cave. Soon Kalayavana followed but inside the cave found a man of extraordinary stature seemingly in deep slumbr. Kalayavana had only seen Krishna from a distance and he could not differentiate between the figure he had seen and this figure stretched before him. He mistook him for Krishna and with a kick of his foot sought to rouse him. He did so indeed but not much to his comfort. The sleeping figure woke up from sleep, sat up and fixed a burning gaze on the Yavana and such was its power that fire issued forth from all over the body of the Yavana, who was immediately reduced to ashes.

Sleep gives such power! We rise everyday and if only our eyes had such power, we would be reducing to ashes several of our enemies. But it does not happen. Some say that we rise from sleep refreshed. But in normal life, it seems to be the exception. People do not want to rise, but for the inviting morning cup of coffee. But let us examine this problem. Sleep and samadhi for all outward appearance are the same. When we sleep, the individual soul seems to get itself lost in something, unaware of where it is. But they say that in samadhi you get merged into the Universal Soul and you become awareness itself. The only common experience is that this world of phenomena escapes from your view. And then what does happen? The life's force is used up through the sensory organs when we are awake. The functions of those senses are still, when we go to sleep and the individual's force will not get lost in any action. So it gets blocked in its outward journey, and goes back to its own source, that is, to the everlasting and existing Paramartha, call it the Saguna Brahman, if you will. Still when in sleep the individual soul tries to go back to its source, there is a thin screen separating the two, not allowing complete merger and the screen is called avidya, a power by which we are prevented from realising ourselves as one with the Paramartha. In samadhi, however, which is a conscious process there is no such impediment and the soul actually merges in Paramartha.

Now in sleep or samadhi, the life force is being stored up and not wasted, the upadhi or our body gets strong; and the stored up power will be available to us to do our work in the succeeding wakeful state; and suppose the samadhi or the deep sleep continues for a length of time how much power could be stored in our upadhi? After all samadhi means only the suspension of the activity of the senses and when each sense acquires the power of the All Supreme Almighty Brahman, in the next bout of wakefulness what can it not do? In Muchikunda's case the entire power which accumulated in the upadhi for several ages by his deep sleep became so powerful that a simple direction, in anger, by him at a particular object, reduced that object to ashes. But we should note that normally the upadhi or body will not be able to bear or contain that vast amplitude of power, without itself breaking away in to bits. That power was given to Muchikunda by the gods, which kept his body particles intact. Ramakrishna Paramahamsa seems to have said that a body would not be able to be in nirvikalpa samadhi for more than twentyone days at a stretch. It is also said by some others that yogis who adopt the Lambika Yoga *i.e.* turning of the tongue and blocking the path of breath in the pharynx by the tip of the tongue would continue the life as long as they will. Anyway it is a deliberate suspension of life in Lambika Yoga. But in the case of Muchikunda it was a boon from the gods. What happened afterwards? God himself appeared before him and declared that He was ready to give him whatever boon He was asked for. And now no conditions were added. Muchikunda, coming to know which gracious Personality was before him, did not want any earthly boon. He said 'Lord, I had enough of this. I played as a king, but which king would not be redued to ashes, and if life were to repeat itself where is the charm in it? Please show me the way for Liberation.' Bhagavan graciously replied "I would have given you the liberation, but your own samskaras stand in the way. You have tread, as a kshatriya the path of violence, and the seeds of that rajas are still in you. Therefore go to Badarikavan and spend the rest of your days in purifying tapas. In your next birth you will be born as a simple Brahimin and with satva guna, when you will do the required tapas and gain liberation.

Now let us turn to deep sleep of Bhagavan. What did it indicate? Here too the outward-going tendencies of the individual were blocked and the individual was so far absorbed into himself and the upadhi must have become most powefful and able to stand the rigours of the discipline, the body had to undergo in days to come. The rigours of the discipline, even if it were not self-imposed, which the body of Ramana suffered from, are so clearly set forth in every biography of him. But who could recognize it at that time? His own people grumbled and mocked at him comparing him to that wonderful Kumbhakarna. Even in the case of Kumbhakarna it may be noted that he would sleep for six months and regain his maximum strength and would wake up for a day, on which day he would be invincible even for the gods. Therefore we need not decry sleep. If it were conscious, it would only give us power. But the power we gain thereby must be used for useful ends. But how can we have this awareness? Arjuna is called Gudakesa,—Gudaka means sleep, that is, Arjuna was one who had conquered sleep; and the Lord is called Hrishikesa—that is the Lord of Indriyas. If you conquer your indriyas you conquer your sleep, that is, if you prevent your indriyas from useless pursuits and preserve the current of pranadhara you require less and less of sleep, to recoup yourself for everyday tasks. And not only great yogis, but all great men are said to have conquered sleep. The great Napoleon would sleep just for the intended period even if it were for a few minutes, and even on horse-back. It therefore becomes clear that by a judicious exercise and practice of the use of our senses we can gain mastery over them, that is, we can obtain Jagrat-Sushupti or the ever-wakeful Jagrat even as the Lord Hrishikesa did. "Aa nisa sarvabhutanam tasyam jagarti samyami yasyam jagarti bhutani sa nisa pasyato muneh."

Seeking

Miss ETHEL MERSTON

Aware, unaware, asleep, awake, all men are drawn by instruments of the Supreme Power; these instruments themselves, too, are on various roads and on varying levels leading to the Supreme, Brahman, the Godhead, call It what you will.

Men are drawn, often seemingly by hearsay or through books read, to one instrument, or another, according to their need and state of awakenedness. When one is prepared by one instrument for a deeper level, then we are drawn, to another instrument level to teach us. No one instrument is for all men; some peoble for instance, came, to the Maharishi and were untouched. The Ultimate permeates all men, both instruments and we their pupils or diciples at all stages of awakenedness to consciousness of the Ultimate.

So it was with me, from the grossest level of worldly knowledge preparing me for the Maurice Nicoll instrument or the psychophysic level who prepared me for P. D. Ouspensky who in turn prepared me for the instrument G. I. Gurdjieff; Paul Brunton instrument through his book finally prepared me for the final instrument for me in this life, Sri Ramana Maharshi, the subtlest level I am able to grap and that only incompletely.

And so, unconscious of my need for a further instrument, I was drawn, out of curiosity I thought, to the feet of Him who is Bhagavan to me. It took but a few moments after entering his hall to know that I was in the presence of the greatest teacher I had met. Whether an instrument or an avatar, I have no power or need to judge. Who am I to do so? He is for me at present the Supreme teacher in outward form, leading, pointing, shaping my work towards a realization of the incorporate Spirit within.

He taught each seeker as suited his need: some in silence, some by answering their questions vocally, or having something read to them which gave the answer to their problem. He was clairvoyant and could read our thoughts, and so knew our problems. Of psychic powers siddhis other than clairvoyance, I saw him use none, beyond conveying thought silently and that so powerfully that its vibrations would sometimes roll in waves down the hall almost hurting one by the force with which they impinged on the body, not only of the recipient, for whom the thought was meant, but on many of us sitting there. Once I could almost see the wave coursing down the Hall, directed to a man at the end doing yogic practices, standing on his head. On another occasion a young fellow was going through all sorts of contortions with his body, groaning and crying out. Bhagavan was at the time reading his mail and coming to a letter written by a woman in the north who asked the value of yogic practices, Bhagavan handed the letter to one of the devotees to read aloud to the young contortioner seated nearly opposite to her. When she had done so, Bhagavan then said pointing to the young man: " He *may* go on doing that for twenty-five...twenty...five... years...then at the end, he will realize... how valueless it is!" The young man heard nothing, absorbed as he was in his struggles. When we left the Hall he was told what Bhagavan had said. He paid no attention, but continued his antics for a couple of weeks more; then fell seriously ill and had to leave Tiruvannamalai. He had been warned that this would happen, but he had paid no attention.

So the Maharishi taught us.

For a long time the problem of the devotional or the jnani path worried me. All around me in the Hall, I saw people worshipping and as many of them were old disciples of the Maharishi, I felt that they must know the way to Realization better than I, so I struggled and struggled to follow that path and feel exclusive devotion. I couldn't and got nowhere. One morning, almost in despair, I saw Bhagavan's eyes turned on me and immediately, as though Bhagavan were projecting it, came the memory of something Gurdjieff, had said: ' For Work, use that instrument which you have developed most; you have developed your mental centre, and suppressed your feeling centre until it is almost atrophied, so the only instrument you have is the mind. That is your way '. This was true, I knew; to avoid suffering as a child, I had developed a very quick brain at the expense of my essentially emotional nature. Now Bhagavan reminded me of this and how gladly I dropped without guilty conscience the devotional path for the jnani way, which is indeed Bhagavan's essential teaching. It was a tremendous relief.

Quite apart, though, from solving our problems, or helping us to do so, just to sit in Bhagavan's presence was to realize, or get a feeling of what true relaxation and a quiet mind might mean. It did not mean, evidently, shutting oneself away, isolating oneself; contrariwise, it meant being with all, yet remaining within, being in the world and yet not of it.

And so I thank Bhagavan, the Instrument who drew and has held me all these years.

OM! OM! OM!!

An Unforgettable Experience

Sri MORARJI DESAI

I was brought up in a home where the atmosphere was religious. As in other Hindu homes, dharma and rituals had their import place in our way of life. We knew the stories from our mythology and those about our saints. Religious occasions were observed with due solemnity. I began to read on religion and philosophy during my college years and continued doing so during the years of my service.

In 1930 I left Government service to plunge in the struggle for freedom which landed me in prison in due course. During my stay in prison I got a unique opportunity to think on matters spiritual in a more systematic manner because of the quiet there and gained much spiritually during the period of about 7 years which I spent in different prisons.

On my release from prison I thought of visiting various centres of spiritual quest in order to see for myself whether my thought pattern had any co-relation elsewhere. It was going to be a tour for spiritual understanding. I had no intention of getting into controversial discussions on philosophy or religion with any one in those places. Nor did I want to settle down at any of the places I intended to visit. I just wanted to observe and learn. With this view in mind I first visited Pondicherry in the latter helf of 1935 - I think it was in August. I stayed outside the Ashram of Shri Aurobindo and experienced the atmosphere there. From there I went to Tiruvannamalai.

I stayed in the Ramanashramam for a day. The atmosphere in the Ashram was such that it could give peace and happiness to those who stayed there. In our country I have visited some other places also where the atmosphere itself sanctified by the presence of saints in the past gives tranquility of mind to the visitor. I have, however, never thought of staying on in such places because I believe that I have to attain peace within myself during the life of action that I am involved in and should not think of depending only on the atmosphere created by great saints and sages in some places for that purpose. It is a part of my faith that every individual has to fix and achieve his ideal and also to chalk out the path he has to tread for the purpose.

During my stay in Ramanashramam I met some of its inmates who were devoted in their search of truth. I had the good fortune of sitting in the presence of the Maharshi for about an hour or perhaps more. He did not say anything to me nor did I ask any questions. I just sat before him in silence and felt great peace and happineess within. That was an unforgettable experience of life. All doubts and questions disappeard from my mind and I found complete peace during the time I was in the presence of the Maharshi. He asked me to take food with him before I left the Ashram. I do not remember the items of food but I only remember that privilege of taking food with him. I considered it a great honour and privilege to have been asked to take food in the company of Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi. In retrospect I feel doubly privileged. This experience gave me an instinctive conviction that Shri Ramana Maharshi was one who had attained the highest Realisation.

The Secret of Tapas

Dr. K. M. MUNSHI
President, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan

If there is one fundamental value inscribed in our ancient culture, it is *tapas*.

The affirmation of this ancient value is not merely a matter of words. It is a purifying process of the body and the mind which is compressed in a significant word conveying the basic value of Indian culture: *Tapas*. " Kaayendriya shuddhi tapasaha ", says Patanjali. *Tapas* is the process of purifying the body and the mind. A man becomes a true Brahman only when he has undergone this process—*tapasaa Brahmano jataha*".

The process is elaborated by Sri Krishna:

> " Worship of the gods, of the learned and the pure, of the teachers and the wise; cleanliness; conformity with the rules of nature; sex—control and non-violence—that is the *tapas* of the body.
>
> Speech which hurts no one and yet is truthful and beneficial, together with sacred recital—that is the *tapas* of the speech.
>
> Cheerfulness, sweetness of temper, silence self-control and the purification of attitudes and emotions—that is the *tapas* of the mind ".

Of them all, purification of the attitudes and emotions—which enters into all the other qualities—is the secret of *tapas*. No life of nobility can be lived without an active sense of this *tapas*; for, it purifies both the individual and the society.

Tapas is not dwelling in a cave. Nor is it giving up food or the affairs of the world, nor torturing the body. It is *Bhaavasamshuddhi*, the training which enables us to conquer greed, hate and fear, to sublimate our passions, purify our attitudes and emotions, and to re-cast our personal relations in the framework of understanding and love.

It is *tapas* alone that brings us the discipline of the intellect, the emotions and the animal instincts in us, as well as to the altruisation of social instincts. It is by it that we will be able to balance the claims of change against the need to lead our own way of life.

Tapas is not only for the saint; it is something which has to do very much with worldly life. It is one of the central values of the Bharatiya Vidya. Everyone in his own life, in every experience, small and big, can invest his attitude with beauty.

We should have a clear idea of the alchemy which *Tapas*, *Bhaavasamshuddhi*, can perform in ordinary life. How can it be performed ?

One can look upon the father as a tyrant, or like Shravan of the *Ramayana* look upon him as a divinity; upon a wife as a biological counterpart, or as a worshipworthy *grihini*, presiding deity of the home; upon a husband as a wicked slave-owner, or as a deity; upon a child as a tiresome brat, or as a *Balagopal*, to be loved and worshipped.

A student can treat his teacher as an enemy to be baited, to be jeered at, to stage strikes against, and thus destroy his own self; or he can look upon him as *Acharyadeva*, treat him with reverence, sit at his feet and absorb whatever learning he can.

In the same way, the teacher can look upon the student as an irrepressible nuisance which he is paid to lecture to, evincing as much interest in him as in a co-traveller at a railway waiting-room, or treat him as a '*spiritual son*', look to his needs, bring to him sympathetic understanding and inspire him to greater effort.

One can look upon a political office as an instrument of personal aggrandisement and enrichment, or as Sri Ramachandra did, as a sacred trust with which one is charged. One can revel in riches, evade taxes, roll in luxuries, deal in black-market, build palaces, run motor cars, or treat himself as *daneswara Karna*, as a trustee for the welfare of others.

Tapas can affect the social structure much more effectively than the social and economic devices of the Welfare State. You can treat marriage as a biological accident or as the unity of souls associated with Vasishtha and Arundhati.

You can treat the family as an economic burden to be grudgingly borne or like the Pandavas cheerfully accept it as a training school for self-sacrifice, mutual understanding and love.

You can treat your caste as an exclusive tribe to be assisted at the cost of others, or as a larger family to whom you extend your sympathy and help from your own resources.

In the same way, *tapas* can enable us to look upon India as an undeveloped country with an explosive population, or as Bharat Mata, the Motherland of the Spirit, whose children we are, whose rivers and mountains we worship, whose Constitution we cherish, and for whose independence we are prepared to die.

We can look upon the world as a cauldron of restless men and women, or rise higher and attain the sublime vision of seeing God in all and all in God.

This form of *tapas—Bhaavasamshuddhi—* does not make us blind to realities.

We are free to take the first path—look upon realities as ugly things and reach the goal of frustration, cynicism, heart-breaks and despair, and create a hell for ourselves.

We can also take the path of *tapas*. Knowing full well the realities for what they are, we can rise above ourselves, convert realities into things of beauty and find fulfilment in our lives—in short, make a heaven of this earth.

The path of true *tapas* is the core of the Bharatiya Vidya. It is the secret of the masters who have built up its immortal structure.

Let me re-define *tapas* as I understand it —*tapas* for which the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan stands : It is essentially the process which progressively enables us to eliminate fear, greed, lust and hate in all that we feel and so, and infuse elements of perfection in them, thereby transmuting them into things of beauty.

This *tapas*, this *Bhaavasamshuddhi*, is not self-delusion nor a subjective attitude. It has the miraculous power, if we have the necessary faith, of bringing into existence the beauty that we cherish.

If our *tapas* is concentrated, as was the *tapas* of our *rishis*, what we believe to be beautiful will in the end become beautiful in fact.

Bhagavan's Universal Message

Sri JUSTICE NATESAN
High Court, Madras

I am asked to give a message and I have been hesitant - what message can I, a layman in these matters with no pretensions to any spiritual life give - when the souvenir emanates from the foothills of the Hill of the Holy Beacon, standing sentinel over the mortal remains of Bhagavan Ramana Maharishi and flashing his eternal message "Know thyself".

What peace and happiness, can that inquiry at the threshold produce even in our material day-to-day life and in the relations of the nations of the world! The identification of self by man with his every passing whim and fancy, his transient desires and requirements, and his all-out effort to satisfy the same brings with it greed, petty jealousies, rivalries and hatred, and if in its wake follows acquisition of physical might, brings also inhuman cruelty, barbarity and mad exhibitions of violence. As individuals make up Nations, hatred and violence get magnified millionfold, get personified in leaders and end in wars of annihilation. The true spirit of man and natural humanism are forgotten and misery and suffering get piled, principally on the meek and downtrodden and innocent; and millions bear it with rare fortitude as their prarabdha. In his blind and thoughtless search for happiness here and now which would be eternal and inexhaustible as if it is outside himself and all the world is for his manifest self, man follows a mirage, becomes a victim of his own creation and ultimately ends distraught and thoroughly disillusioned seeking crutches or intensely wicked, brutal and cruel. And to these millions, even as the Hill of Arunachala rising in solitary grandeur over the rugged landscape in myriad forms at its foot hills, the Maharishi was found alone in silent majesty, shedding his grace when they came to him in search of peace.

Here through the Souvenir I would like to share with my readers an unforgettable moment I had at the Ashram. It was years after the Bhagavan attained *Samadhi.* As happens to all institutions, some one somewhere thought the abode of the Bhagavan, which was manged by a registered Society, was not being looked after properly, and the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Board's intervention was sought. These authorities initiated proceedings to take over the administration of the Ashram, starting, if I may say so, at the wrong end - they would label a shrine within the Ashram as a Hindu temple and regard the Ashram itself as its adjunct. That would give them the necessary jurisdiction. At one stroke thereby the very foundation of the Ashram, the universality of its outlook and appeal, were sought to be shaken.

The Bhagavan was universal in his outlook and his Ashram was free to all irrespective of race, religion, caste or creed. Hindus, Parsees, Budhists, Jains, Muslims, Christians, theists and atheists and rationalists - all were and could be at home in his presence, drinking deep the peace that pervaded in his presence and resided at the Ashram.

Two thousand years back on the sea of Gallilee the Nazerene spoke and asked man to see himself: "Hold your heads high, you are the children of God". And the Bhagavan, as I see it, said the samething, "Know thyself". Through ages in another form the sages in this county had been saying practically the same thing, "*Tat tvam asi*" "That thou art". To the uninitiated like myself and to the ordinary mortals revolving in the vortex of life, the messages appear to be the same. Students of theology or philosophy and dialecticians may discuss their niceties and distinctions; the dogmas and creeds - the Holy Trinity, *advaita* and *dvaita* philosophy, monism, and so on, But in practical life it leads us to the realisation of the greatness of the individual soul, its uniqueness and the realisation there from of equality of all men, the true basis of democracy and the rule of law. "The man who loses his life shall find it", said Jesus. To the same, the enquiry directed by the Bhagavan leads. In a truly secular democracy also, the individual self must find itself in its compatriots. To the individual, in the process of the inquiry, "Who am I", as the "I" slowly melts, a contentment is born and a capacity developed to look with serene detachment the daily tribulations, the slings and arrows of fickle fortune, and man gathers strength to walk this world with head held high. This is the message of the Bhagavan to the millions and the inspiration and solace one can get at the Ashram is thus for all.

While this was the Ashram, and the Bhagavan intended that the Ashram should be so for ever, the whole case for action under the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Act was rested on the theory that Sri Mathrubhuteswaraswami temple in the Ashram precincts was a Hindu temple, and the Ashram just its annexe. The Ashram authorities approached me as a a lawyer for defence against this intrusion and imposition of a thesis wholly alien to the Bhagavan's life. But the shrine had all the paraphernalia of a Hiudu temple; to a considerable extent in form it conformed to a Hindu temple and there was similarity in the mode of worship at the shrine with Hindu idol worship. But admittedly it was built over the mortal remains of the Maharishi's mother. The mother that had given birth to the Maharishi later realising that she could no more claim him as her son became the devoted mother of all that came to the Ashram. And so, as human homage takes various forms the shrine came to be built on her remains and worship developed there to Annai or mother as Sri Mathrubhuteswara swami—a name associated with a deity in the Hindu Pantheon.

The only defence that could stand the claim of the authorities was to plead the true un-Hindu nature of the shrine despite the strong Hindu bias that could be seen in it, and the universal appeal of the institution. I wanted to set up the defence that a Hindu Brahmin widow was not entitled to *sannyasam* and so not to *samadhi*, according to recognised Hindu *Sastras*, and that stripped of all embellishments and emotional sentiments, the shrine was just the place where the dead body of Sri Ramana Maharishi's mother was buried and the *pooja* that was offered there was symbolic, to *annai* or mother. To the orthodox Hindu, the place would be *Rudra Bhoomi*, besides burial in the case being unshastric. Considering the large body of Hindu worshippers the plea was likely to look rather sacrilegous. But the record and literature of the Ashram which I went through for finalising the defence amply supported the position. The Maharishi's own expositions were available. The authorities of the Ashram readily agreed to the defence in that form, and it is noteworthy that from the quarter from which one may expect dissent, as it closely and greatly concerned them in many aspects, the Sarvadhikari, of the Ashram, another son of the lady, and his son Sri Venkataraman, the present President of the Ashram, one got not only ready assent but also the closest co-operation in that defence. (The proceedings as well as the history of the shrine are fully discussed in the judgment of the Madras High Court when the case came up to the High Court, having been lost before the lower Tribunal, and at these later stages of the case I had the lead of Sri T. M. Krishnaswami Iyer).

It was during these proceedings when in connection with the enquiry at the early stages I had gone to the Ashram, I had the unforgettable vision. I had reached the Ashram late one evening and was resting for the night in the Mourvi guest house opposite to the Ashram. It was a little after midnight and I just came out on the verandah facing the Ashram and there from about the *samadhi* of the Bhagavan, in some kind of pale bluish effulgence, the orm of the Bhagavan—it appeared ethefreal—with a walking stick in one hand and in slow deliberate steps, seemed walking towards the hall towards the stone Sofa and there melted away in the void. I am unable to fully describe the vision—it cannot be anything but a vision, as physically my vision would be obstructed ; it may be the creation of a feverish brain after a long and tiresome journey, fatigued and crammed with a hotchpot of all kinds of literature : it may be just wishful thinking taking shape before weak eyes in the dead of night; But whatever it might be, the effect was stunning and at the moment real. I went chill and then felt that I must take it as Bhagavan's own confirmation of the defence I had taken. There it is, two learned Judges of the High Court have accepted the defence in its entirety, the learned Judges observing that the devotees belonging to all castes and creeds came from all over the world in search of the Bhagavan and the solace and peace his presence gave.

Now it is proposed to have *Kumbhabhishekam* at the earliest habitat of the Bhagavan. *Kumbhabhishekam* from its practical aspect or from the point of view of society makes the place holy— sanctifies it ; in this case it is only being so recorded ceremoniously and with rites that the visitor should feel that he·is treading holy ground, not just visiting a tourist attraction.

I wish Mrs. Taleyarkhan, who has been at this, all success in her attempts to place on solid foundation places connected with the Bhagavan that they may for ever be radiating His universal message.

Mrs. Taleyarkhan and other devotees, with Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi.

Sri Ramana Maharshi

Dr. C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR

I have learnt with profound satisfaction that owing to the dedicated loyalty and self-forgetful labours of devotees of Sri Ramana Maharshi like Mrs. Taleyarkhan, her colleagues and helpers like Mr. Tarapore and Her Highness Maharani of Mandi, the Kumbhabhishekam of the Pathalalinga shrine will be celebrated shortly.

I have, on several occassions, paid my tribute to the unique and highly evolved personality of the Maharshi. From his earliest days, he was other-worldly and wisdom came to him through intuition and inspiration. As in the case of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, so in the case of the Maharshi, illumination reached him by means of a deeply-felt devotion to a particular manifestation of the Divine by which he was led on to experience the ineffable Paramatman. Through deep concentration, he attained Samadhi and after complete realisation dawned on him, he appeared as a guide and exemplar to the outer world ; and, for some years, he continued to enlighten an increasing number of devotees who resorted to Tiruvannamalai from this country and from abroad.

The Maharshi's teachings were simple and he spoke little and wrote little ; but the words he uttered and the verses that he composed were direct in their appeal and meaningful. It is not, however, so much by reason of his formal teachings of the Advaita nor even by his lambent devotional verses that Sri Ramana Maharshi will be long remembered. His personality was unique and he manifested in his own person the paramountcy of the spirit over bodily feelings and sensations. Those, like myself, who met him during the days when he underwent an operation for cancer, could not but marvel at his serenity and total indifference to corporeal pain and suffering. He proved to a doubting world that man is essentially a spirit temporarily imprisoned in flesh and blood but by insight and personal experience of the Divine, that spirit could conquer outer impacts and sensations and remain unmoved in utter absorption.

Personages like Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, His Holiness Sri Narasimha Bharati of Sringeri and Sri Ramana Maharshi reveal to us the potentialities of the human soul and the possibilities of the sublimation of the Self.

Sri Arunachaleswarar Temple

Its Location and Importance

This ancient and historic temple is situated in the town Tiruvannamalai within a few furlongs from Tiruvannamalai Railway Station on the Villupuram–Katpadi section of the Southern Railway. This shrine is one of the Pancha Bhuta Sthalams representing Jothilingam (Fire) renowned in Saivite lore. It is situated at the eastern foot of the hill known as the Hill of the Holy Beacon, on the top of which the holy Beacon is lit every year as the culmination of Karthigai Deepam Festival. It symbolises Lord Siva appearing as Jothi or fire before Brahma and Vishnu. It is also said that God receded into the hill and assumed worshipful form for the devotees. Therefore it is said that the hill itself is sacred as lingam, according to Skandam.

The temple itself consists of 24 acres in extent with prakarams and four main gopurams on four sides of the main compound wall. The temple faces east with Rajagopuram 217 feet in height (tallest gopuram in the South) with 11 stories with its base alone measuring 136 feet by 98 feet. The antiquity of the temple is traced to 6th century A. D. One of the inscriptions in the sanctum sanctorum of Sri Arunachaleswara makes mention of Parantaka I AD 907-953. The Rajagopuram and Thousand Pillared Mantapam were built between A. D. 1500 to 1512 by the Vijayanagara Naick and Pallava Kings. Further inside is Vallala Maharaja gupuram built in the name of Vallala Maharaja between A. D. 1340 to 1347. There are two sacred tanks, one Sivaganga and the other Brahma-Thirtham.

The famous Tirupugal Songs came to be sung by Saint Arunagiri, when Lord Muruga blessed him when he fell from Vallala Maharaja gopuram. It may be interesting to note in this connection that Saint Arunagiri is said to have been born at Tiruvannamalai. Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi performed his tapas partly in thousand pillared mantapam now known as patalalingam. It may also be added that many saints and seers had moved in the sourroundings of the holy hill such as Kugai Namasivaya Swamigal, Easanya Jnana Desikar and Seshadri Swamigal.

The administration of the temple vests in a Board of Trustees with an Executive Officer appointed by the Commissioner,

H. R. & C. E. (Admn.) Department, Govt. of Madras.

The festivals in this temple, weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual are numerous, the most important of them being Karthigai Deepam Festival.

The expenditure of the temple exceeds its income which is just sufficient for routine pujas.

The temple needs urgent and immediate repairs in many places and in the gopurams. The Kumbhabhishekam was done long ago and it has to be done for the preservation of sanctity and efficacy of the moolasthanams. As regards the immediate repairs and renovation of gopurams a statement of rough estimate is given below :

Rough Estimate

(1) Raja Gopuram on the East Side ...	5,00,000
(2) Tirumanjana Gopuram on the South Side ...	30,000
(3) Pey Gopuram on the West Side ...	1,00,000
(4) Ammani Amman Gopuram on the North Side ...	40,000
(5) Other small gopurams ...	30,000
	7,00,000

Hence generous donations are requested from the philanthropic public to carryout the above urgent repairs.

Sri T. S. BADRACHALAM PILLAI.
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Devasthanam Office,
Tiruvannamalai,
6—2—'66.

The Rock and The Flame

Sri K. SRINIVASACHARI,
Advocate, Tiruvannamalai

Knowing the drawbacks and the struggle to get over them is the essence of the conflict in one's life time. Some perish; some stand up with strength and some are triumphant. To one inclined to introspection the theatre of the conflict is his own self. The flame of knowledge is the weapon with which the world-weary body puts up a fight with itself sinking if the will is weak. If one is blessed with a strong will, the body is obedient to the spirit and to one blessed with Trne Knowledge of His Self, the body has absolutely no meaning. It has only as much significance as one attaches to the dress he puts on, casting it away when it becomes worn out or dirty and taking on a new one.

The generality of mankind has crass ignorance of the Self and arising from it, is the constant refrain that Life is a burden and existence a struggle. For, all the time he looks at the world around and finds the same distorted, decadent image of himself reflected in every other fellowman. Truly it has been said that the world is a looking glass and reflects faithfully the image set before it. A soul glowing with the flame of True knowledge finds every other of God's creation on this earth, man, animal, birds or plants-as a spark of the Brahman. Such an evolved Being finds the whole universe in a grain of sand and the Giant Oak in the acorn.

What is that True knowledge that lets the door open to the understanding of the Universal Spirit, that animates every thing here and in the cosmos. Has it anything to do with man and God, or with man and this world or with man and man? None of these can bring about that sweet repose that the knowledge of *Man* and *Himself* bestows. A small example can explain. Hold a torch and direct the beam around, you are always in the dark though every object on which you direct the light sparkles for a time. What we call knowledge today is exactly the torch we hold in our hand directing the shaft on men and matter, ourselves always remaining in the dark. True knowledge is the torch directed *on you* and *by you* all the time. Such torch-bearers are the seers, the sages, and the Mahatmas. Hold a torch, they proclaim, but let it throw light on you. That is the quintessence of their teaching.

One such torch-bearer was the Great Ramana Maharishi. What flame was it that he held in his hand which attracted so many wearied souls to his presence? What was the divinity that he proclaimed to the noisy world by his eloquent silence? He is understood and revered to the extent the devote is evolved in spiritual experience. Like some tall cliff that lifts its awful form, leaving the strom midway and enjoying ever-lasting sunshine on its crest, he stayed on the slopes of Arunachala, smiling at the ignorance of the people, but all the time feeding the sacred lamp of True Knowledge on the peak.

Devotees thronged to his presence, each bringing with him his cares and desire for a solution to life's enigmas. Many stand at the foot of the Himalayas. But are the thoughts of all the same? To a poet like Kalidasa, the snow-clad peak reminds him of the Jaganmatha and Jagatpitha and he makes obeisance to them in a classic epic. To a mountaineer standing at the same foot hill, the snow-clad peak is not Kailas or an incarnation of God, but an ordinary mountain, somehow the tallest in the world, and as such must be challenged by him. What a contrast in their approach to the same Himalayas! But to both the Himalayas stand silent. So did Bhagawan Ramana stand silent. Come with a spiritual longing his silence is a Book, his smile a soothing repose, his simplicity a measure of spiritual strength.

Many go through the events of his life with greater curiosity perhaps than dedication. Our approach to his life is not that of drawing strength from him, but of collecting the mere facts-that he stayed here in his teens, that he did penance in the Patala Linga cave, that while being supremely indifferent to the world around he was greatly devoted to his mother etc., etc., But honestly, how many of us have searched our hearts to find out what inspiration or what could have prompted him to take on the voyage of this quest? Generally, it is summed up in the few words "The Divine Call of Arunachala". But has it ever occurred to us that the Divine Arunachala could not be partial to call Ramana alone and that his call is to all his children on this earth. Only we have plugged our ears to the Call, but Ramana had kept his ears very sharp. To make amends for our failings we can do the next best-to understand the real undercurrent of the purpose of his existence. There is a great maxim

Udara Charitnanamthu Vasudeiva Kutumbakam). For noble souls the whole world is a family. That was the purpose of his existence and silent example. It was not by accident that he chose the centre of Tiruvannamalai. To me it appears to be deliberate. Two things alone can help one cast away the outward trappings of life and enjoy the presence of the Divine in him. That realisation of the spark of the Divine in every atom in this world is true Bliss of life. The two things are: A strong Will and the flame of True knowledge. Ramana has this to teach us. Be firm in your quest as the mountain. Fix your gaze on the flame on the peak. That is Arunachala.

So is the significance of the caverns where Ramana did penance. To many it might appear he had shunned the world and had hidden in a cave to do his penance. But really it has a symbolic meaning. Amidst the encircling gloom, the flame glows. The cave is after all man's ignorance. While the universal flame of Brahman shines man's ignorance is like a small dark cave. It can be lightened with a torch and that torch is nothing but the flame of knowledge. That was exactly what Ramana Maharishi wanted to teach to the world. Each human heart is a Pathala Linga, dark before the Maharishi entered it. Now with his flaming penance it is a glowing spot casting around spiritual light. Into each heart has to be carried a flame as Sri Ramana took into the Pathala Linga.

To sum up Ramana Maharishi, by his silent example has put before us two truths that alone can lead us to the pinnacle of Bliss: A strong determined Will firm as a rock and the search for the Flame of Knowing Thyself. Tiruvannamalai stands for both-The Rock and the Flame. Ramana was there to proclaim that "the lives of sages and seers all remind us that we can make our lives sublime".

Cherish Ramana's Memory

SHUDDHANANDA BHARATI
Kavi Yogi

Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi lived like a flaming I'M to the seeking enquiry of WHO AM I? He had only one answer to the only question of eternity-Koham, Soham. Ramana sat as a symbol of the unique self-I free from body-consciousness. Body ripens and rots; none can keep this for ever. The petals have fallen; but the fragrance of I'M is embalmed in every conscious heart. Real Ramana is the central 'I' which is the core and quintessence of beings. Ahmi or Asmi 'I'm' was the supreme and prime revelation of God. That is the Delphic Oracle revealed to Socretes-Know Thy Self. Self-I is the Alpha of psychic consciousness, the central Truth of Vedanta. The Maharshi was That and is that for ever in the heart of lovers. All physical monuments and memorials are simply reminders of the Self-I that Ramana was.

This supreme Truth was confirmed in the aweful silence of the Patala Lingam shrine inside the temple of Arunachala. It is the haloed corner where Ramana lay forgetting the body and the mind in Flame trance of transcendent I'Am. It is that very spot where Swami Seshadri found him and declared to passers by 'Here is a Sage!" Patala Lingam temple is the nucleus of Ramanashram which is widening and widening in its radiance every day. If Ramana has conquered millions of hearts to day by dint of one awakened heart, that conquest began in the Self and that Self blazoned forth in the gloomy corner of the above temple. Hence the importance of the Patala lingam shrine.

Thanks to the sincere efforts of Sister Taleyarkhan, the dilapidated shrine was renewed in 1949. The opening ceremony was done by our great Rajaji. And now another appeal is made by our Sister for donations to effect its Kumbhabhishekam. Kumbhabhishekam is the crowning ceremony of a temple. On that day thousands of devotees will think of Ramana and feel His Presence and become alive to the Self-I in all.

An opportunity agian calls for the devotees of Ramana to show their love in action.

I wish the endeavour every success that it deserves. Let bells ring "AUM AUM" and incense burn with Soul's aroma in the sanctum where Ramana sat as the Self in All!

AUM TAT SAT!

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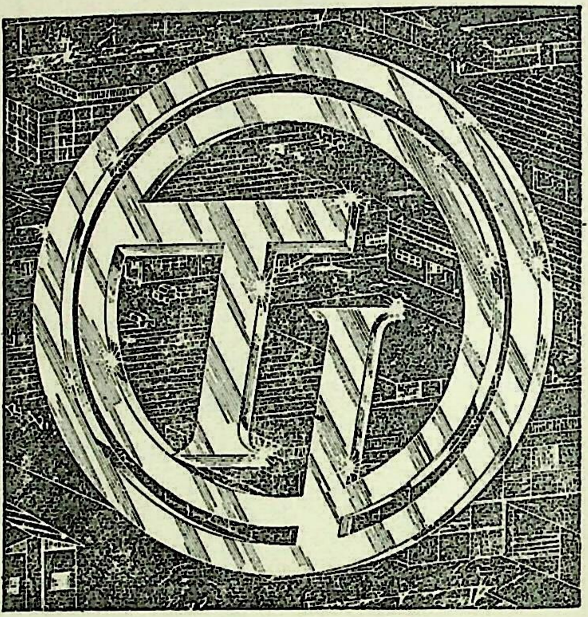

Ambattur, a tiny village twelve miles away from Madras, lay sleepily, neglected by history, by-passed by the industrial revolution. Then, on a cool morning in November 1949, the village woke suddenly to life. Bulldozers and excavators arrived on the scene to be followed by a mass of steel and weird-looking machines. The T.I. Cycles factory had come into being. ■ T.I. Cycles was only the first venture of Tube Investments of India, a joint enterprise of Murugappa & Sons of Madras, and Tube Investments of England. The scope of the TI group had been widening year by year and today it embraces steel strip rolling, tube making, the manufacture of cycles and cycle accessories and industrial chains ■ T.I Cycles was the harbinger of a new industrial era for Ambattur, and its environs are today among the busiest industrial townships in our country.

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HOMAGE

—T. M.

My first glimpse of you, most holy sage,
Was from the sacred Hill you adored ;
From amongst a crowd of numerous men,
You clearly stood out as their Lord.

If garments alone could distinguish men,
With ornaments added therein ;
You certainly stood there like a statue in bronze,
In your sparkling bare amber-like skin.

Later when at your feet I knelt,
And looked up at your face in awe ;
The compassion I read in your sacred eyes,
Nothing could have moved me more.

Day after day at your divine Feet I sat,
Tears rolling down my eyes, as even now ;
For the memory of those adorable eyes,
Churn up my inside, and how.

Forgetting all my worldly wants,
Even the questions to ask, I had come to you for ;
Silent initiation flashed from those wonderful eyes,
Penetrating my being to the core.

Asked by a kind friend if I wished to speak to you,
I replied I had nothing to say ;
All I wanted was to gaze into those endearing eyes,
Which into a mystic world sort of pulled me away.

On my eve of departure, it was hard parting from you,
Sadly I walked out towards the sacred Arunachala Hill ;
Turning around for a last look, I was thrilled to see,
From the Hall window, your dear eyes were upon me still.

Not a day has passed since then dear Lord,
When I have not re-lived that last parting look ;
In silent blessing, those deer-like sacred eyes,
Seem to gaze at me from every corner and nook.

Sri Ramana Maharshi

Sri K. S. VENKATARAMAN
Sri Ramanasramam

Sri Ramana was in the authentic line of the Rishis of India, the seers who had a direct perception of the Truth and who presented their original and first hand experience to the world. He was not a mere Sadhu or Saint, not a mere Sage, not certainly a scholar expounding the scriptures, or a philosopher building up an intellectual system, not the maker of a system but one who saw and revealed the Truth. He was a *jivan mukta*, one liberated in his very life. He became that, not by following step by step the process prescribed in the Shastras - hearing or learning, cogitation and abidance but by adopting a short and direct way discovered by himself or revelled to him. Hence he is a Drashta, a Seer, and not a mere Pravakta, a propounder. Again unlike the other great seer-sage of this age, Sri Ramakrishna whom Ramana resembles in so many respects, but like Sri Aurobindo he has given an abiding expression to his darsana in inspired words, in his two poems "*Ulladu Narpadu*" and "*Upadesa Saram*", the first a clear exposition of his philosophy about Reality, and the second, as the very name implies the essence of all spritual teachings, the way to attain Reality. The two together form a complete guide to spiritual path and life. They are held to be Amanushyavak-Superhuman utterances of the nature of the Upanishads, direct and inspired utterances of a seer.

Sri Ramana's teachings are the same as those of the Upanishads, the non-duality of the individual self and the universal Self. But his manner of approach to the central problem of philosophy and his presentation of the central truth are strikingly original and simple. People who expect philosophic thought to be subtle, abstruse and tortuous, find here no logical hair-splitting, no spinning of philosophic cob-webs, but a simple, straight and convincing answer, which disappoints the sophisticated by its very simplicity. Likewise the Sadhana that he prescribes, Aham Vichara or Atma-Vichara, takes one straight to the core of one's being and the heart of reality. But above and beyond these gifts to the world for all time, for over 50 years he shed over an increasing circle of disciples the sweetness and light of his grace. Even here his way was unique. In most cases he dispelled doubts and instilled peace, strengthened faith and quickened aspiration not by the spoken word but by his cool piercing look and the dynamic peace that ever radiated from him. The sceptic and the scoffer too were touched by a power and peace that changed them for ever. Superficial observers comparing him with other sages might say that his help to the devotee was like that of the mother-monkey to which the young one has to cling, and not like that of the mother-cat which clasps and carries its young ones. This is a mistake, for he was not impassive and indifferent to the spiritual needs of those who came to him. Like Buddha he was full of compassion for all and his grace went forth towards all who sought him. But each received according to his openness and receptive capacity.

None came from the Maharishi's presence without being uplifted. But this touch had to be renewed by the seeker and deepened, the spark that was kindled had to be fanned into a flame. However, no giver or saviour can kindle the sluggard and the slacker.

The Maharishi teaches that "Atma Vichara"-Self-enquiyy, is the supreme sadhana for the highest realisation, for by a swift means it merges the ego-self into the true-self. This self-enquiry is not a mental enquiry into the nature of the self but a firm fixing of the mind in the pure awareness of the Self. The mind is merely the stream of thoughts, feelings and volitions. If without being carried along in its outgoing activities, we steadily observe the source whence its flows it falls inactive. So, the mind, the locus of ignorance, has thus to be destroyed and that is done by one-pointed concentration. The transformed mind then becomes pure consciousness and that is Atma Darsana. This realisation is the highest yoga (union with the self), the highest jnana (knowledge) and also the highest Bhakti (devotion). Such is the simple and sublime sadhana taught by the Maharishi. This spiritual technique is universal, and open to all men of all religions, and how easy it seems. Under his guidance it was verily simple. Those few who were privileged to know him were fortunate, and those who lived in the suburbs of his grace and influence were truly blessed. But his departure from the body should not make any difference to the world of aspirants. So to the world we say, though he is gone, he is yet with us.

Where Did he go?

W. W. W.

Has not all conceivable praise, and not a little worship already been lavished on Sri Ramana Maharshi since he went out of manifestation?

But glorifying a Master is conceiving him as an objective reality. Subjectively he was God, but as an objectivised Master he can only have been known by our senses as a phenomenal concept.

Is there a greater or more obvious bondage than devotion to the concept of a glorified Master, and was not his life-work our release from bondage, which is bondage to the concepts of self and other ?

If they had found him *within* they would not need him as a concept !

In the purer forms of Buddhism the Masters tell us "Should you meet the Buddha, turn away and pass by on the other side". That is in order that we may be free.

Would Bhagavan have taught otherwise regarding himself? What kind of a God is one who seeks worship? Was not one of his last words the question " Where do they think I could go "?

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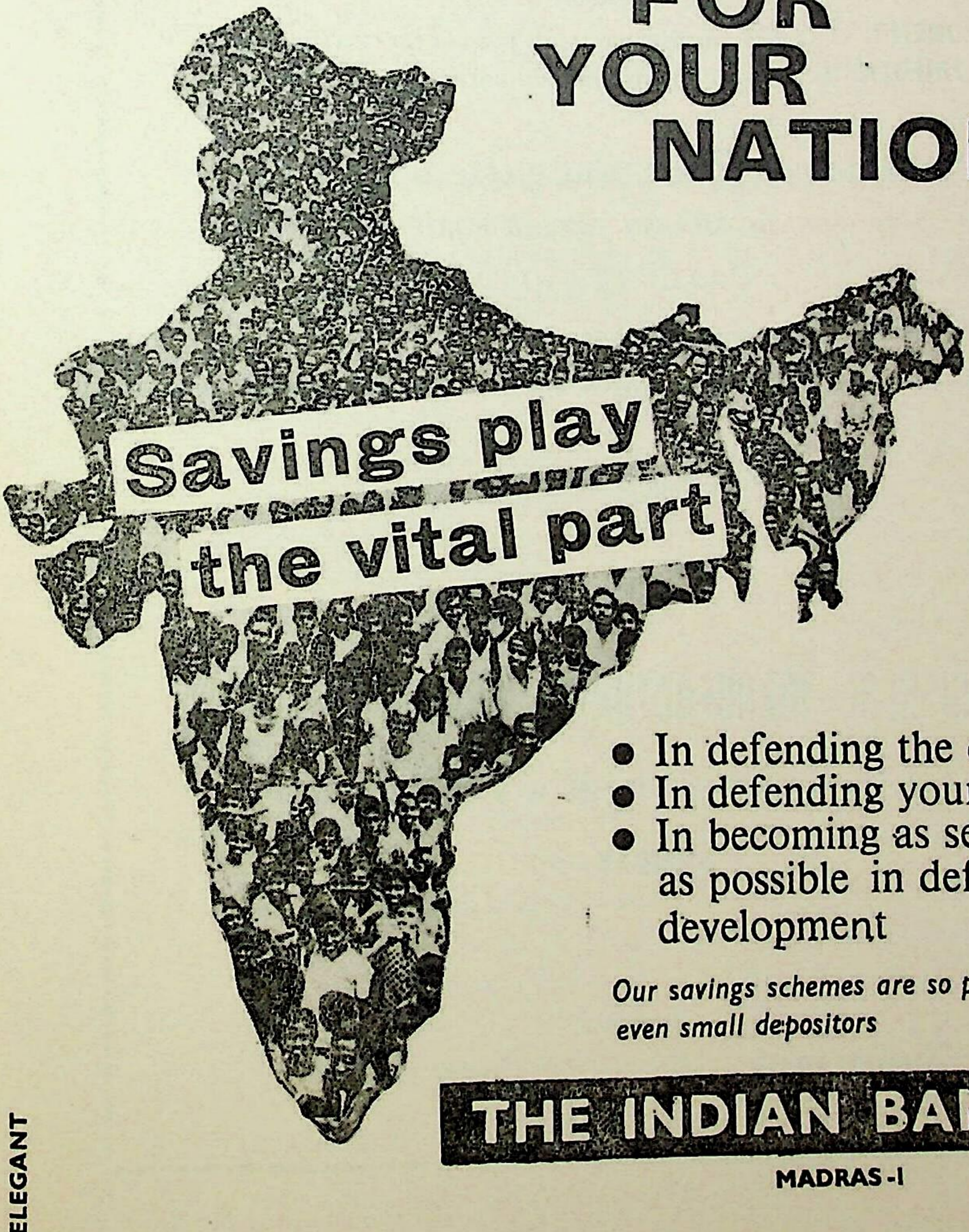

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Where is the Path?

He was days and nights on his divan
Sitting so simply
At all the people who came his look was
Looking so quietly.

They came near him, sat at his feet and said:
O! Bhagavan!
Where is the path of thy Self, our Self?
Where is the path of the Infinite?

He looked at them and smiled
Then he showed the hill
Where reigns Shiva the Immutable, with face in granite stone
And the place where one could hear
The echo of Vedic songs,
Springing out of the rock
As in times of old.

They went up the hill
And contemplating the sunset
In the purple and gold of the changing skies
They lost themselves in the Infinite.

Yet they came back near the divan
Of Bhagavan
They said: we want to go
Where there is no coming back
Where we shall be only one with Thee
Only one with the whole World.
What to do? O! Bhagavan!

He answered : Walk !

Then they set out during moonlight nights
Walking hours and hours round the hill.
Some were singing, others meditating,
Others repeating God's Name
To the rythm of their foot-steps,
Others again were singing nothing,
Saying nothing, thinking nothing,
Walking hours and hours
With eyes lost in sky.

When they arrived in the town
They were drunk with moon and stars
And they did not understand why
The shop-keepers were yet sitting
Behind their tea-glasses
And the small biscuits
Waiting for the customers.

They came back finally near the divan
Of Bhagavan
Sat at his feet and spoke no more.

Bhagavan Sri Ramana and His Message

T. M. P. MAHADEVAN

Bhagavan Sri Ramana and Arunachala are inseparable. From 1896, in which year Sri Ramana as a young boy arrived at Tiruvannamalai, till 1950 when his physical body passed away, he remained throughout at that sacred place, in the Temple, on the Hill or in their vicinity, inspiring those who went to him or even heard about him, by his plenary spiritual experience. Apparently without any earlier preparation, Ramana had become a perfect sage: he was then only seventeen going to school at Madurai. Having come by the Great Awakening, he found no use for the routine life. He left home and went to Arunachala, the very mention of which by an elderly relation of his sometime earlier had fascinated him. For the first few years the young seer stayed in seclusion; and not many knew of his presence in Tiruvannamalai. But the lamp could not be kept under a bushel for long. Even as the Holy Beacon that is lit annually on the top of the Hill could be seen from afar, the effulgence of the Maharshi came to be felt by aspirants all over the world; and the *Ashrama* that grew around him still continues to draw spiritual pilgrims of all denominations.

The source of the Maharshi's teaching was his own spiritual experience, Self-realization as it is called. He did not learn the plenary truth from the sacred books first and then realize it: in his case the realization was earlier, and lateron when the books were read out to him or brought to his notice, there was found corroboration of that realization. The first great Sanskrit scholar to meet him was Ganapati Sastri. This scholar of eminence was also a spiritual leader of a group of aspirants devoted to *Sakti* worship. But all his scholarship and even all his austerities, he realized at last, had not been of much avail. He was then residing at Tiruvannamalai. One day he went up to the Hill-Cave where the Maharshi was then living as a young Svami. Prostrating himself before the sage, he confessed that inspite of all his learning and spiritual practices, he had not understood what true austerity (*tapas*) was, and so he earnestly sought from the sage enlightenment in this matter. For quite a while the young sage looked on in silence, and then at last replied: "If one watches whence the notion 'I' arises, the mind is absorbed into that: that is *tapas*. When a *mantra* is repeated, if one watches the source from which the *mantra* sound is produced the mind is absorbed in that: that is *tapas*." This answer came as a revelation to Ganapati Sastri, and he was filled with joy. He broke into song in praise of the young Svami, and proclaimed that henceforth the Svami should be known among his devotees as 'Maharshi' and 'Bhagavan'. These titles did not, of course, make any, the least difference to Bhagavan. But on account of the recognition of the sage by a great scholar, the way was opened for an increasing inflow of spiritual seekers into august presence of the Awakened One.

Usually the sage's instruction was through silence. Many a doubting inquirer found his doubts dismissed by a mere look of the sage. Rarely was there a need for express words. The Maharshi's luminous eyes lit within the hearts of many the lamp of understanding and peace. The first Englishman to see the Maharshi, F.H. Humphrys, gives the following description of his visit in 1911. " On reaching the cave we sat before him, at his feet, and said nothing. We sat thus for a long time and I felt lifted out of myself. For half an hour I looked into the Maharshi's eyes, which never changed their expression of deep contemplation...... The Maharshi is a man beyond description in his expression of dignity, gentleness, self-control and calm strength of conviction." This was the normal experience of those who went to see the sage. Many would go to him with personal problems; and quite a few with questions of public concern. But once they settled down in his presence, those problems and questions would cease to worry them, and they would experience an unspeakable calm within. Several of the visitors would feel ashamed that they had gone there with petty ideas, and would be supremely gratified for having been granted an insight into plenary Truth.

It was not that Bhagavan Ramana was observing any vow of silence in the early years of his stay at Tiruvannamalai. Only he did not feel inclined to talk. But whenever there was a need he did express himself through the written or the spoken word. The Muses came to him uncultivated. He composed metaphysical as well as devotional poems. He wrote mostly in Tamil, but some of his writings are in Sanskrit, Telugu, and Malayalam. The earliest of his compositions are in Tamil prose: 'Self-Enquiry' and 'Who am I?' They were written at the beginning of this century by way of instruction to two of the early devotees. Among the poems are the well-known *Forty Verses* (*Ulladu Narpadu*) with the *Supplement* (*Anubandha*), the *Upadesa-sara*, and the various *Hymns to Arunachala*. Besides these, Bhagavan Ramana has translated into Tamil six works of Acharya Sankara and a few other Advaita texts.

In an invocatory verse which Sri Ramana has added to his Tamil rendering of Sankara's *Hymn to Dakshinamurti*, he says:

mannuma munivarar santi mannave
tenmukha murtiyayt tigalndu monamam
tannilai tigalttiyit tutiyir ranmayan
connavac cankaran runnumennule.

"That Sankara, who appeared as Dakshinamurti to grant peace to the great ascetics (Sanaka, etc), who revealed his real state of silence, and who has expressed the nature of the Self in this hymn, abides in me."

It is the same Advaita teaching that we find in Sankara and Ramana. The ultimate Reality is the non-dual Self. The so-called triad of realities, God, Soul, and the World, are not really three. As Sri Ramana teaches in the *Ulladu Narpadu* they are, in truth, one. They appear as three only so long as the ego lasts. The various distinctions and multiplicities subsist on the One; when the latter is realized, they disappear. The one Self is the Supreme Truth; plurality is illusion. True accomplishment is the gaining of the Self which is existence-reality. All other accomplishments are like what is achieved in dreams.

'Realize the Self' 'Accomplish the Real' —such expressions should not be understood in their literal sense. The author of a recent book *Why Lazarus Laughed* writing under the pseudo-name *We i Wu Wei* explains this point by making a reference to Bhagavan's teaching. "The Maharshi suggested", observes this author, "that the trouble may arise through the word 'realize'; it is a verb, and the last syllable implies action of some kind. But no action is possible, and to try to take any defeats its own object. It means 'to take or render or become real" but that which is real in us is so already, always was and always will be. We can no more 'become' real than we can become ourselves."

What has to be done, then—if we may use such an expression— is that we should become awake to the eternal Reality that we are. What stands in the way of that awakening is our wrong identification with the ego— the pseudo-self. The method taught by Bhagavan Ramana for the rejection of this identification is the enquiry 'who am I?, The essence of this technique consists in tracking the ego to its source. The ego or 'I' - thought is the first of all thoughts. By seeking the source of the ego, viz., the place whence the ego arises, one puts an end to the ego itself. This can be accomplished also by surrendering the ego to God or the *Guru*. The excellence of the path of self-enquiry, however, is that it is the most direct road, open to the theist and the atheist alike, to the learned and the not-so-learned, to the orthodox and the unorthodox. In the following verses of the *Upadesasara*, Bhagavan Ramana describes this path :

manasam tu kim margane krte,
naiva manasam marga arjavat,
vrttayastvaham vrttimasritah,
vrttayo mano viddhyaham manah,
ahamayam kuto bhavati cinvatah,
ayi patatyaham nijavicaranam,
ahami nasabhajyahamahantaya,
sphurati hrtsvayam paramapurnasat.

"If the mind unceasingly investigates its own nature, it will be seen that there is nothing called mind. This is the straight path open to all.

"The 'I' thought is the basis of all thoughts; the thoughts are the mind; know the 'I' to be the mind.

"Whence does this 'I' arise? Seek for it within; lo, it vanishes. This is the self-enquiry.

"Where the 'I' disappeared, there the 'I-I' shines of its own accord : this is the Supreme plenary Reality."

To the Sage of Arunachala who in our time showed us the way of wisdom, let us pay our homage on the sacred occasion of the Kumbhabhishekam of the Patalalinga Shrine in the Great Temple where he spent his early years in Tiruvannamalai.

Ramana Maharishi's Therapy for all ailments

Dr. T. N. KRISHNASWAMI

Who am I? is an aid to self-observation. It is not given for bestowing thoughts upon it. It is not to think about the 'I'; but to change one's way of thinking about oneself. It is to make one conscious of what is going on in the thing called oneself - of thoughts, feelings, emotions, that keep rising and coming into the light of consciousness.

It is to develop inner attention which is quite different from attending to one's profession and other things in life. When you are alone you must see, in the company of what thoughts you are. The worst thoughts may come and surround you when you are alone and when nobody is looking on. To think that one may indulge in any thoughts when there is no one arround, means that you have no inner sincerity. Such a man cannot enter and benefit by this path of self-enquiry.

This thing called oneself, which is taken for granted but which is only a fictitious and invented thing, invented by oneself and believed in by oneself; due to lack of understanding of the Self. The Maharishi calls this a spurious offshoot arising in between the body and the Self. This thing goes about saying 'I' to everything that happens in the body. It says 'I' to every thought and feeling arising in the body. Any thought can enter the mind, you should not believe that 'I' is thinking it. Nearly all thoughts that casually come into the mind have to be carefully watched and rejected as "not mine". You should not lend your 'I' to those thoughts; they are not your thoughts; they are standing before you and clamouring to be identified with you. If you are thoughtless you will let them become your thoughts. You should not listen to those thoughts; you should not go with them; when the thoughts present themselves, you should at once ask the question "Whose thoughts are these"? The thoughts serve a useful purpose when they make you raise this question. If this question is sincerely asked the thoughts lose their hold and die out: "Thougts cannot exist without the ego". Thoughts serve a useful purpose to the seeker, for they are all pervaded by the ego which is the object of search. "If one seeks the pervading ego in every thought then thoughts are pushed aside and one reaches the source of the ego-the Self".

Thinking makes the spirit forget its real nature and identify itself with the body; the identity is unnatural to the spirit and makes it restless. "Are there things to think of; thoughts can function only if there are objects. There are no objects, there is only the Self. The habit makes us think that it is difficult to stop thinking; thinking must be clearly seen to be an error; then no one will waste even a thought. The mind that realises the error of thinking, gets collected and settles into the peaceful Self; one's glory consists where one totally ceases to think. The mind must see that its inherent sickness is itself.

If your name is 'X'-you are identified with him; you are fastened to him; you are held in prison by him; he accompanies you; he enslaves you. He is your enemy, you must guard yourself against him; he appears to be your friend, your well wisher nay he appears to be, you yourself. To identify with him is the tragedy in life called samsara. This fictitions 'I' has replaced Reality. You must learn and practise to identify with the passive observer of 'X'. That which observes your thoughts and worries, is the new point in you. One should try to be conscious of this observing side in oneself; this is different from the vital, mental and emotional functions of the body which are all on the observed side. One must carefully draw the line between this pure observing point and everything else. One imagines that he knows the self; that he has self knowledge. Man is merely stuck up with an illusion which he has chosen to call 'I'. This is a wrong view; one should question himself 'Who am I?' till this erroneous view is corrected. He who thinks from this wrong view thinks everything wrongly.

The Maharishi gives the right view to think from. Man is doped by life and is asleep; he does not know who he is; whatever other knowledge he has is worth nothing, unless he knows himself. One imagines that he knows himself; if you imagine you know yourself you will not seek it. So the Maharishi sets you the powerful question 'Do you know who you are?' Outer reality revealed by the senses is common to us all; Maharishi is not concerned with them. The inner reality behind thoughts and feelings lies invisible and hidden within us. This can be penetrated by each one himself. One can seek and reach this invisible inner reality by the power generated by raising intensely the question 'Who am I?' to oneself.

In this Sadhana, there are no outer appearances to be kept but only an inner state of awareness. If your name is 'X', you must separate from him. You may repeat your name silently to yourself and think about all that your name stands for and you must separate from all that the name signifies. You must stop being 'X' and ask yourself 'If I am not 'X' then what am I ?' (XYZ).

The Self being inherent should not be sought elsewhere. The Maharishi wants every man to search for his 'I'. This is not to be sought as an object, nor is the 'I' the subject which one thinks himself to be. For whatever one takes to be his 'I', proves to be somethingelse on proper investigation. This Sadhana 'Who am I' demands a form of thinking beyond oneself. This thinking tastes differently from the usual thinking to which persons glued to their life are accustomed. This Sadhana develops an inner sincerity which is lying unused and which could see and understands many things not revealed to the ordinary senses. This proces is called awakening.

Man has far more powers in him than necessary for living. This power is in the heart and it is the heart itself and man's effort should be to contact this power. Man is free to react to life as he chooses; and he is free to submit to this higher power. He need not suffer when an unpleasant thing happens. Man suffers only by mechanically submitting to it. It is given to him to choose not to suffer, whatever may be the circumstances. This is what the GEETHA calls SAMADARSANAM. What we call our waking life is only a dream; which means that we go through our life asleep. The sleeping man can wake up by submitting himself to the influence of the Sastras and enligetened men. This can be done only by each person individually and privately.

You need not mechanically go with a worrying thought; you are free to withdraw from it. This is freeing and has a soothing effect. This is wisdom, and wisdom is not one's birthright. One has to struggle for it. "Will power should be understood to be the strengh of mind to meet success or failure with equanimity. Why should one's attempts always meet with success? Success breeds arrogance and retards spiritual progress. One should gain equipoise of mind under all circumstances." It will take quite sometime for a man to realise that he knows nothing of himself. One should really learn to look at himself through this idea that each man is a stranger to himself.

This SADHANA does not value those who value themselves. For him who has a strong sense of 'I' and 'Mine' there is no salvation. One who always thinks of his own welfare, his own possessions and his own comforts can never come under the influence of the Maharishi's teaching. Man is not created to avoid unpleasantness and and discomfort in life. They afford him a chance for overcoming them. The difficulties offered by life are opportunities for KARMA YOGA. This is the means for inner development. Life's events may become one's teacher to teach non-attachment in everything. Non-attachment is not indifference. It is a kind of wise and conscious separation from what is happening in one, and what is happening around one. It is not coldness or running off from life. It is walking with a calm and dignified detachment right into the events of life, an attitude that comes out of the understanding that self, is unique and untouched by life.

The Maharishi was a living example of this state. When robbers broke into the ashram and finding nothing to lay hands on, gave the Maharishi and inmates a good beating, the Maharishi took it in good cheer and humourously remarked that the robbers only did their duty, their dharma. When a man identifies himself with a sorrowful event, it drains off a lot of force from him. In order not to identify, one must learn not to identify with himself. This is the main purpose of the Maharishi's teaching. This is hard work on one-self. This is to change entirely one's outlook on his own 'I' and not to change the world.

Spiritual Leaders I have met

Shri C. R. PATTABHIRAMAN

Union Dy. Minister for Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi.

The Great Sri Sankara describes communion with Maha Purushas in his "VIVEKA CHUDAMANI" as one of the rare good fortunes that may occur to a man or woman. He says :—

दुर्लभं त्रयमेवैतद्देवानुदाहहेतुकम्
मनुष्यत्वं मुमुक्षुत्वं महापुरुष संश्रय :

"It is very rare indeed and it is due to Divine Grace that one should be born as a man, have a desire for realising one's self and attaining Moksha and have the protecting care of a great sage, who is a Maha Purusha".

The eternal Brahman is in the heart of all phenomena moving and unmoving and is the One which appears as many. Therefore all is Brahman. "You are pervading all and are therefore all" exclaims Arjuna in the Gita on seeing the Visva-rupa of the Lord. However, certain attributes are more manifest in highly evolved spiritual leaders than in others and it is about these that I wish to refer in this article. I am confining myself to persons who are primarily spiritual leaders. I am not writing here about my father, my first Guru, my mother, nor other elders to whom I owe much, Nor am I referring to the leaders in other fields of activity who have influenced me in many directions. My teachers and professors in India and England are *sui generis* and need separate treatment.

From my very young age, it was given to me to have darshan of and sometimes to spend some time with spiritually advanced and mature people. I consider it to be my good fortune to have been alive at a time when such great souls lived in India. I have already written in this magazine that my great grand-father, who was called Tahsil Venkatasubbiah spent his last days mostly in Kancheepuram. It was for him that Sri Seshadriswami, the precursor of Sri Ramana Maharshi of Tiruvannamalai, read some of the ancient scriptures. Due to failing eye sight, Venkatasubbiah sought the services of the bright young lad who even in those days showed clear signs of spiritual advancement. This was during the last years of the last century and a reference to this has appeared recently in an article on Seshadriswami in the "Kalyana Kalpataru". Sri Venkatasubbiah's daughter, my grandmother Mathusri Rangammal was one of the disciples of Sri Krishnananda Swami, a well-known spiritual leader who lived in Tanjore District. I was very young when I met this swami. He was serene and calm and had at all times a smile on his face. There always used to be a stream of spiritually-minded people flowing into our house, apart from that of learned Vaidika Brahmins well-versed in the Vedas and Sastras. Great was the influence on me of the late Brahma Sri Subramania Dikshitar of

Tiruvanaikaval who was the Guru in our Sama Veda Patasala and my preceptor at my Upanayanam.

The elders of my family have had close association with the Sringeri and Kanchi Kamakoti Mutts and the late Jagadguru Sri Nrisimha Bharathi Mahaswami of Sringeri had given 'Upadesa' to my elders. He was one of the most respected men of the early years of this century in South India and he was in addition to being a great Siddha, a great writer. His successor, the late Jagadguru Sri Chandrasekhara Bharathi Mahaswami made a great impression on all those who had the good fortune of meeting him. I first met him with my parents in Coimbatore in 1928–29 and thereafter at Kaladi when he went to Travancore after the Temple Entry Proclamation. At Kaladi, the birth place of Sri Sankara I spent sometime with the Jagadguru. It amazes me to think of the hundreds of people who saw him day after day, each with his or her own malady, worry and misery, seeking remedy and solace. He appeared to take over the burdens of those who sought refuge at his feet and many are the miraculous instances where suffering humanity got relief in various ways. His worthy successor, the present Holiness Jagadguru Sri Abhinava Vidhyathirtha Swami is attracting thousands of devotees. He is rejuvenating as it were our ancient Sanathana Dharma. I first got a glimpse of His Holiness on the banks of the beautiful Tunga river in Sringeri about two decades ago. Simple as a child he charms his devotees by his pleasant smile and a fine personality.

I have equally been fortunate in having come into contact with His Holiness the Sankaracharaya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam. Thousands of people in Madras have had darshan of him when he was in Madras some time ago. He is one of the acknowledged great spiritual leaders in India and his disciple a young Swami possessing a piercing intellect is getting prepared to assume the burden of the pontifical office in due course. His Holiness has lightened the burdens and lighted the paths of those who flocked to him. It is difficult to over-estimate the great work of His Holiness in bringing together not only the various communities but also the various sub-sects amongst Hindus. By his "Tiruppavai-Tiruvembavai" programme during "Margazhi"—(about the middle of December and the middle of January), the angularities of the Saivites and Vaishnavites are being rounded off so that all pious and good people can concentrate on the fundamentals of religion. His Holiness has trekked practically throughout every village in South India and has taken light to many dark corners. The annual "Sadas" which is being held during "Navarathri" has acquired an international fame. There are many admirers of His Holiness not only in Asia but also in Europe and in the Americas His very presence in a place sheds lustre and He has the capacity to electrify his audience without any effort whatsoever.

The two Acharyas are the two eyes for the spiritually and philosophically-minded people particularly in South India. We have proudly to remember that in an unbroken line of succession, the mutts of the Great Sri Sankara have been having, one after another, great spiritual leaders occupying the peetams. As pointed out by my father in his book on "Homage to Sankara" this has not been equalled in the history of the pontificates anywhere else in the world. It is not surprising that with evolved persons leading a clean and regulated life and given to spiritual practices during most of the day and a good portion of the night there should accumulate a spiritual power and achievement. They certainly will not be affected very much by the dual throngs of happiness and misery, success and failure to which the rest of the world is so much subject. The scientifically-minded and modern person may take note of this and understand the value of the message these saints convey to a not too happy world. They help mortals to turn their mind and intellect inwards and to contemplate on the Imperishable Truth which persists amidst all that vanishes and is untrue." (असतो मां सद्गमय)

"From the unreal lead me to the real" is a well-known Vedic prayer.

Another person to whom I must make a a reference was the well-known Siddha, the late Mauna Swami of Courtallam who observed complete silence. He used to stay on occasions in our house in Madras in the olden days. With bright eyes and a brilliantly lit up face he would listen to any question put to him and would write the answer on a piece of paper.

About Sage Ramana I have written in some detail in the "Call Divine" (Annual Number 1960). Practically the whole of his holy life was spent in Tiruvannamalai near Sri Arunachala. His message was a marvellous short cut to self-realisation and he never strove to establish any new cult. He did not write much and a few prose - and verse compositions are about all that he has left behind him. They are the essence of our Vedanta and the Upanishads. In his death as in his life he has demonstrated his realised state. The deadly final ailment weakened his body but never touched his mental poise or his supremely blissful state. My readers are bound to be awe-struck by a perusal of an article in the "Call Divine" (October 1960 part - pages 40 to 43) by Lt.-Col. Karamchandamani, District Medical Officer, at Vellore, who gives an eye witness's and expert's account of the last moments of the Maharshi. I consider the generations that lived during his life time as extremely fortunate. To have met him in life was itself a transformation of one's inner being.

Swami Sivananda, who belongs to the same Sama Veda as I do and is also a descendant of Sri Appayya Dikshitar is another great spiritual leader to whom I am much indebted. The little knowledge I have of the great classics and of the Vedanta was imbibed by me from the books written by this Swami whom I have once impertinently called a modern and a streamlined guru. I purchased from one of the railway bookstalls in the early thirties the Swamiji's stories from Yogavasistam and they made a great impression on me at that time and my wandering mind was brought to attention as it were by it. Like Sri Ramana Maharshi, Swami Sivananda takes hold of the gems for our great spiritual treasures with both his hands and seeks to gift them to all those who come into contact with him. Many are the spiritual leaders today who in some way or other owe their training to him.

I must also refer to an Avadhuta Swami whom I met at Kedarnath in May 1952. It was very cold even though it was sunny at Kedarnath when I met him. Most of us were clothed with warm clothing and some were even wearing overcoats and gloves, but the Avadhuta was completely naked and he was in a corner inside the temple. I had heard about him and went to him. He would not take food with his hands and would eat only whatever was poured into his mouth by devotees. I had the good fortune of giving him some milk.

Dr. Annie Besant influenced our household very much until her last days. She was a great friend of my father's. We in India owe much to her not only for her great political work but also for kindling in us a respect for our customs and habits and for our religion and scriptures. From Banarsa to Madras and all over India are strewn many institutions which owe their origin to her foresight and energy. When I was a student in England she used to treat me with much kindness whenever she came there and made me meet persons like Lady Emily Lutyens and Major Graham Pole. The work at Adyar especially in the publication of our ancient books is one of the real monuments to her. She told me that she was going to be born again as an Indian after her then current life and that Indians would really love her then.

Sri Aurabindo whose dharshan I have had, had perhaps one of the sharpest of human intellects of all times. His prediction of India's freedom and her new status proved to be amazingly correct almost to the nearest hour. He appears to be as alive today as he was in his body before death and I have no doubt that in spirit India will have his guidance in the days to come.

Mahatma Gandhi had come to our house with the late Shri G. A. Natesan on his arrival from South Africa and I met him for the first time then. It was given to me to be with him when he visited Travancore after the Temple Entry proclamation in 1936. The greatness of the Mahatma lay in his utter faith in and dependence on God who permeates all. I was one of the leaders of the volunteer organisation in Madras when he visited the city in the forties. His dedicated life and his stay in Bengal at the height of communal strife are already part of our history. He had great affection for South India. Modelled after him to a large extent is Sri Vinobha Bhave. He honoured a village near Madras city by staying there for a short time during his southern trek and it was given to a few of us to have done rural reconstruction work there sometime before his arrival.

I have known J. Krishnamurthi for many years. It was in his guardianship case that my father made his name as a lawyer appearing against Dr. Annie Besant. I always felt whenever I heard Sri Krishnamurthi that much of his talks could be clearly traced to our Upanishads and Vedanta. He has, like Swami Vivekananda, taken the light from India to the distant west. The modern mind in and outside India is benefitting by his discourses and is made to turn its vision inwards. He is an unbound soul and does not fall into any known class of sages and saints.

Swami Suddhananda Bharatiyar, who has now taken up the editorship of "Call Divine" is a great yogi and has dedicated himself for work in this "Kali" yuga. A number of persons are his disciples and he is doing great work in the real uplift of India. It has been my privilege to have listened to his discourses.

There is a story of two young parrots born of the same mother who had to spend their lives, one in a pious household and the other in a gambling den. The former was always using pleasant words and welcoming people, while the latter was frequently shouting abuses even at passers by. This illustrates how much one can be influenced especially in one's childhood and youth by one's environment. It is more important now in this atomic age and of the nuclear weapon than ever before that we should be able to spend at least a few minutes every day in an atmosphere of introspection and meditation and if possible in the company of the spiritually advanced persons. In the Gita, the Lord attaches importance to the reading of the Gita and discussions about the Gita in the company of people with Shraddha. He also warns against the dissemination of the scripture in the company of those who cavil and have no proper approach to Truth. This variety of human beings has yet to travel some distance in their evolution.

Sat Sangha results in many benefits, the least of which is a capacity to bear with some equanimity the shocks, disappointments and sorrows of life as well as its joys, successes and happinesses. As often as possible it behoves us to contemplate on the Real and the True, taking our minds away from all that which is changing, temporary and evanescent. This is made easy and pleasant by the company of the good and will elevate our minds and our souls and prepare us to be of some service to humanity. "Arise! Awake" thundered Swami Vivekananda. "Up India and conquer the world with your spirituality; materialism and all its miseries can never be conquered by materialism." I believe we in Bharata Varsha have a mission to perform in the world. May Providence give us the strength and fortitude to carry out our task.

The Great Sage and the Great Deovtee

C. K. KRISHNAN

Late in the evening on the 14th of April 1950, as I was strolling along the Commander-in-chief's Road, Madras, in the company of my son, my attention was suddenly drawn by him to a bright meteor catapulting across the North-Eastern sky. It disappeared in a few seconds; but the impression it left behind in my mind, was that it was an exceptionally bright body. At about 9-30 the same night, I received a telephone message from a friend conveying the sad and depressing news of the attainment of Mahasamadhi by Sri Ramana Maharshi about 2 hours earlier at Ramanashramam, Tiruvannamalai. The next day, several daily newspapers of these parts reported Maharshi's demise with full details and most of them referred to the unusually bright meteor which passed through the sky at the time of his death and made an attempt to establish some connection between his passing away and the appearance of the meteor. When I read these reports, I was reminded of William Shakespeare's famous lines in "Julius Caesar" :

> *"When beggars die there are no comets seen;*
>
> *The heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes."*

Bhagavan, as Sri Ramana was known to his devotees, was a prince among the great spiritual personalities of our country. It is only once in many myriad years that so rare a flower as he appears in the garden of humanity spreading spiritual fragrance far and wide.

During his lifetime I had the good fortune to have his darshan on about 40 to 60 occasions and to sit in his presence and enjoy the serene calm and peace which emanated from him. The hall in which he used to recline on a couch both in the evenings and mornings, was a place where one could, if so inclined, plunge into the deep well of one's spiritual being and later withdraw refreshed, serene, satisfied and happy. In that hall was maintained an absolute silence, a silence, the healing touch of which could destroy sorrows of the human heart and raise earth-bound souls to a higher plane of existence. Maharshi's presence radiated spiritual splendour and cast a subtle magnetic influence that exerted a strange fascination on those who thronged to him seeking relief from sufferings of all sorts. Even those who came out of curiosity to see him, could not resist the temptation of coming again, no longer out of curiosity which had been satisfied, but owing to some mysterious attraction.

I have not heard of Sri Ramana giving any discourse to his devotees; in fact he spoke rarely and very little and he was not known to have had any disciples. His teaching was manily through influence and this had more value and power than teaching by precepts. In and around him there was always the intoxicating sweetness of the divine and a radiation of blessed peace. I have heard of a great number of changed hearts and changed lives primarily due to the silent spiritual influence of Sri Ramana.

One prominent instance of such changed life, is that of my good friend Mrs. Feroza Taleyarkhan. From the high society life in the fashionable city of Bombay where she was born and brought up, this lady went in search of peace and tranquility to the holy feet of Sri Ramana at Ramanashramam in the little town of Tiruvannamalai. I am not aware and I did not at any time make inquisitorial inquiries to ascertain, the reason which induced her to choose this change of life. It might have been peculiar abnormal conditions in her home or complex environmental factors in society or both or it might have been some strong inner urge. Very few people would have expected this versatile and fashionable lady who all her life had been accustomed to comfortable and luxurious living, to stay on in the Ashramam for a longer period than 2 or 3 months. Most people thought that boredom would drive her back to her normal life in Bombay. But day after day with an unfailing regularity she sat at the feet of the venerable sage and little by little with an imperceptible but persistent gentleness, peace wove itself into the texture of her mind. The mood of serene triumph over personal distresses which she could not attain before, came to her by slow degrees. Her faith in Sri Ramana became unshakable and in the sunshine of his holy presence she gradually reconstructed herself within - a metamorphosis of life that one can only come across very rarely. It is now 28 years since she settled down at Ramanashramam and anyone should be proud of such an attainment.

An extremely versatile and energetic person, Mrs. Taleyarkhan had a smooth easy assurance and a graceful extemporaneous charm of manners. Her personal magnetism was almost irresistible and these qualities enabled her to attain tremendous success in whatever she undertook.

During her long stay in her own little cottage near Ramanashramam her active and energetic nature was always fully utilised in rendering help and service in regard to the various activities of this institution. Owing to her influence among the rich and the aristocratic people of this country, she travelled throughout India at the request of the Ashramam administrative authorities and successfully collected sufficient money for the completion of the Mathrubutheswara Shrine at the Ashramam, the construction of which was held up at one stage for want of funds. It was she who with her own untiring efforts and the generous help in the form of a substantial financial contribution solely made by J. H. Tarapore of Madras, constructed in 1947 a beautiful small temple over the pit in which Sri Ramana started his great tapas when he was a teen-aged youth, and on its completion, successfully induced Sri C. Rajagopalachari, the then Governor-General of India to visit Tiruvannamalai and declare open this temple. I was present on that occasion and I watched and wondered at the admirably efficient manner in which this lady shouldered the responsibility of the visit of the topmost official of the Government of India and conducted the entire function unmarred by the slightest flaw.

Mrs. Taleyarkhan's attentions and energies are now diverted towords the completion of Sri Ramana's Samadhi and Meditation Hall in the premises of Ramanashramam and the early performance of Kumbabhishekam in the little temple which she built over the pit referred to above. Incidentally I may mention here that this pit is said to be the samadhi of a great but unknown sage and is marked by a stone Siva Linga, Nandhi etc. A small piece of land covering the pit, and the Siva Linga, was allotted to Mrs. Taleyarkhan by the Government for the construction of the temple.

Mrs. Taleyarkhan is one of the Trustees of the Board of Trustees of Ramanashramam and it is to her the difficult task of expeditious completion of the memorial to Sri Ramana and the performance of Kumbabhishekam in the temple built by her, is entrusted by the Board of Trustees. A great Karma Yogi, she will put her heart and soul into any work entrusted to her however difficult it may be, and when her endeavours are crowned with success, she will attribute it to the will and grace of " my Bhagvan " as she calls Sri Ramana. Her faith in him is so staunch.

An indefatigable worker, who directed her efforts for the good of Ramanashramam and its inmates, a great and sincere devotee of the Maharshi, an affable and sweet natured and energetic personality, Mrs. Taleyarkhan is one of the most unforgettable characters I have come across.

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